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The
POSTAGE STAMPS
of
MANCHOUKUO

ROY HIDEMICHI AKAGI

NEW YORK

1941

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By

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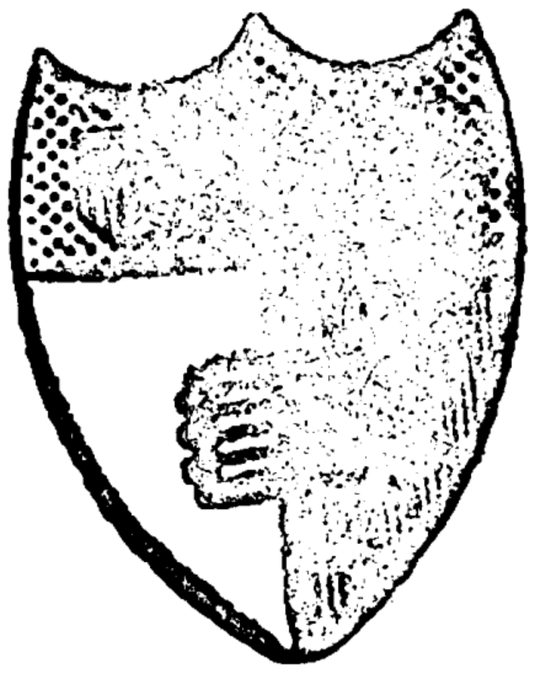

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PREFACE

Ever since Manchoukuo had issued her first postage stamps in 1932, I have been a student of her succeeding postal issues and I have kept up an extensive research work on postal affairs of the country as well as on stamps themselves, including varieties. It is a fascinating field of philately, much of which still remain unexplored.

In my wide contacts with Western collectors of Manchoukuo postage stamps, however, I have long since discovered that it is rather difficult for them to obtain necessary information on the postal issues of that youthful State. It was indeed a pleasant surprise that my virgin article, "A Check List of Manchoukuo Varieties", which appeared in the *Scott's Monthly Journal* for December, 1936, should have aroused such an unusual interest everywhere and that I should receive all sorts of inquiries ever since.

It is with such a background that this booklet was conceived and prepared. It is an attempt to summarize essential facts concerning the postage stamps of Manchoukuo for the benefit of Western collectors. Most of the material have already appeared in Japanese in the *Kitte Shumi* of Tokyo and they are made available in English herein for the first time. I sincerely hope that it will prove to be useful alike to Manchoukuo specialists and general collectors. I shal' always welcome corrections and suggestions if they are offered in the interest of philately.

I wish to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to Mr. Taroh Kakehi for his generous assistance in rendering into English the difficult pronunciation of Chinese characters.

ROY H. AKAGI.

New York City,

February 15, 1941.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Manchoukuo, the State of Manchuria, declared her independence from China on March 1, 1932. Soon afterward, on March 20, the new Government announced that the newly organized Department of Communications at Hsinking would take over the postal administration from China on April 1, 1932. Under the confusion of things at the time, however, the efficient organization of the new postal administrative organs immediately was difficult and the proposed execution of the work was unavoidably delayed. In the meanwhile, the postal employees of the old regime were allowed to remain at work and the use of the old Chinese postage stamps was continued.

In order to give the country an uninterrupted postal service and to take it over in as smooth a manner as possible, the Department of Communications at Hsinking entered into negotiations with F. Poletti, the Postal Commissioner representing the Nanking Government at Mukden and pushed plans to issue a new set of Manchoukuo postage stamps by August 1. As a result, an understanding was about to be reached under which the old postal system and staff as they were at the time would be taken over by the Manchoukuo Government. Suddenly, however, the Nanking authorities ordered the blockade of all postal activities in Manchuria as of July 24th and the consequent withdrawal of all employees to China. Accordingly, all books and other equipments, articles and forms, were withdrawn and the old post offices were completely closed on July 24th.

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Under the circumstances, the Department of Communications immediately took steps to organize a new force by mobilizing all available workers with experience in postal service. This work was executed with amazing efficiency and all post offices were reopened on July 26th. The new postage stamps, which had been distributed for the official release on August 1, had been pressed for use on the same date. Consequently, the Manchoukuo first day cover bears the new Manchoukuo

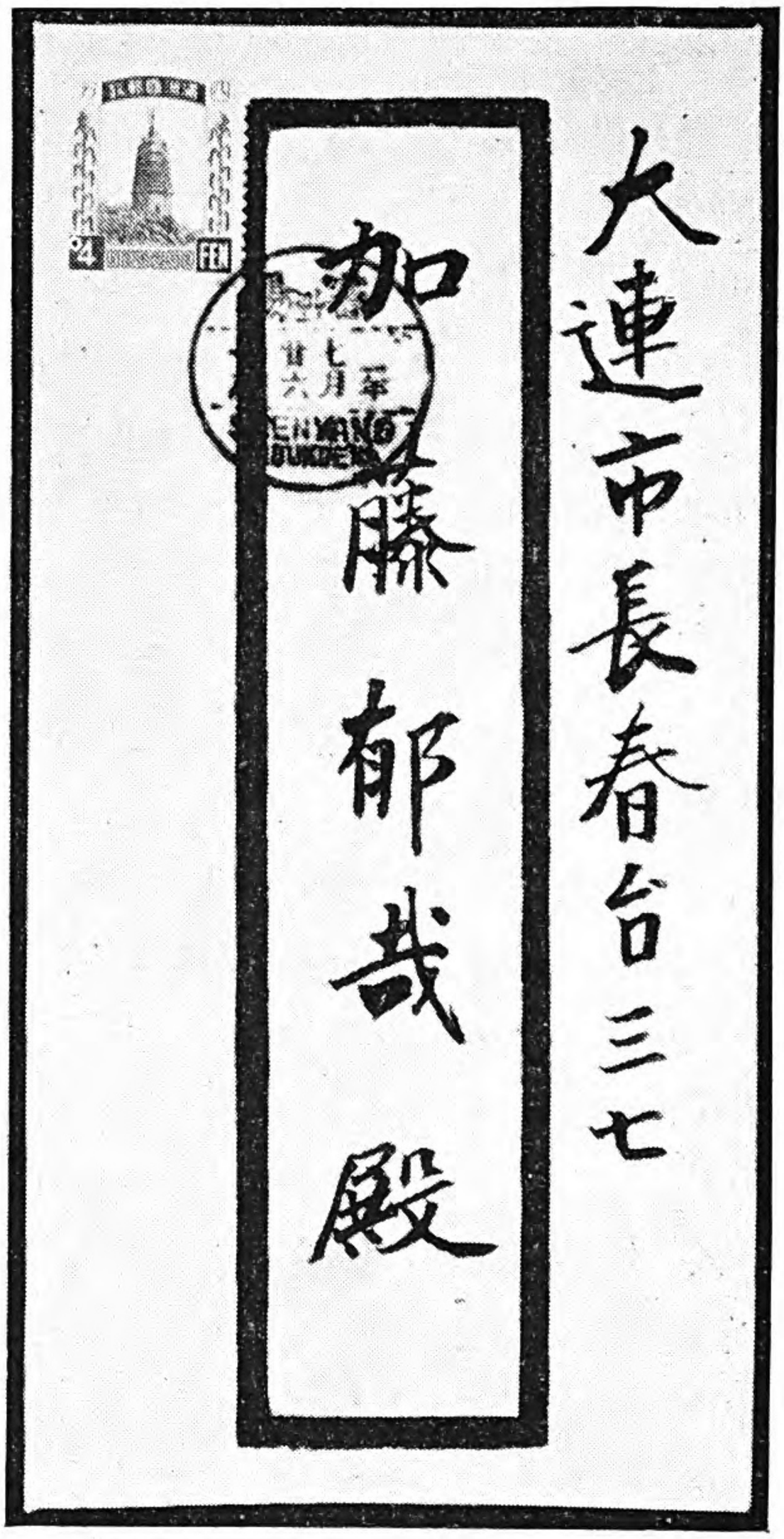
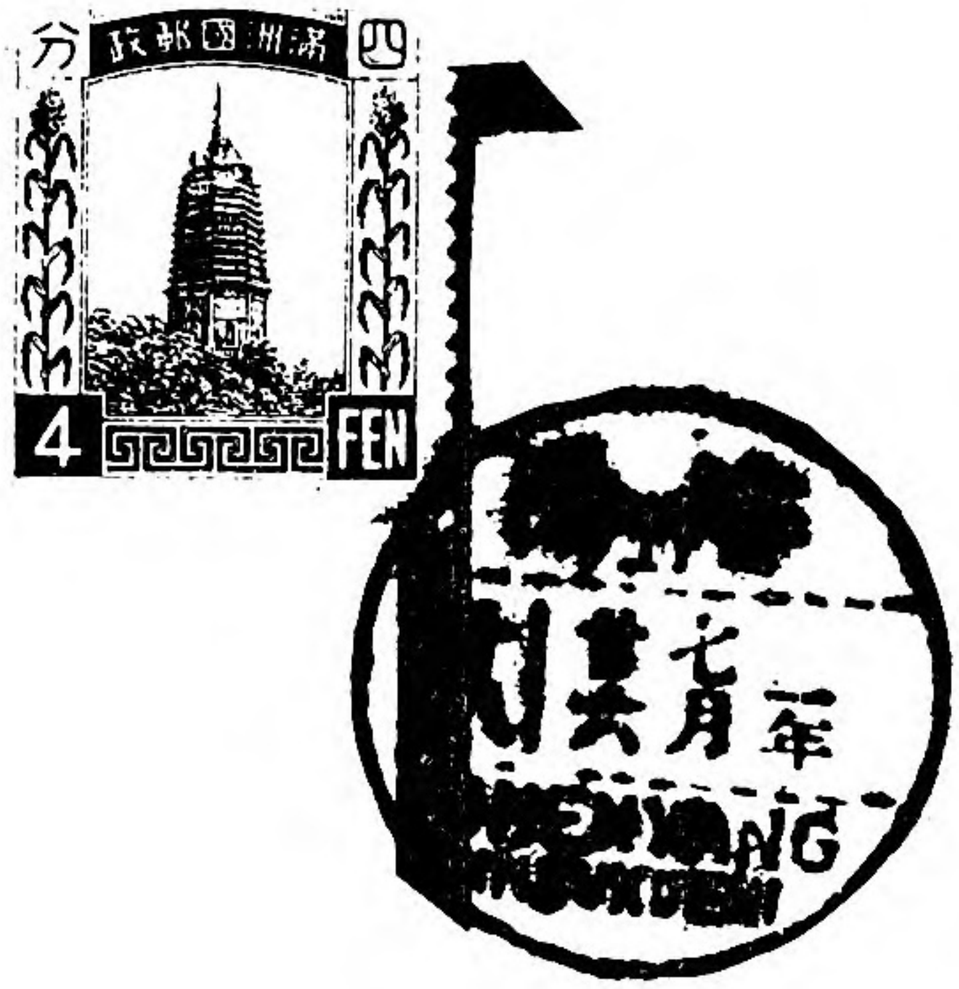


Fig. 1



postage stamps and the old Chinese cancellation, the character for "20" of the "21st Year" having been broken off to read the "1st Year". Thus was inaugurated, quite unceremoniously, the new postal service of Manchoukuo.

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The postal facilities in Manchuria during the later years of the Ching Dynasty and also during the early years under the Republic of China were carried out more like a private enterprise than a national service and were supervised by the Postal Commissioner's Office in Mukden. This was changed in 1921 when China was divided into twenty-four postal districts and Manchuria into two postal districts, Mukden and Kirin-Heilungkiang, with postal commissioners' offices at Mukden and Harbin, while the Province of Jehol was supervised from Tientsin. When the Manchoukuo Government took over the postal administration on July 26, 1932, it continued the system of two postal districts, the Mukden and Harbin Districts. The third or the Hsinking District was added on November 1, 1934, and the fourth or the Chinchou District on April 1, 1937.

The postal administration in Manchoukuo has received a new deal under the new regime and has undergone a remarkable transformation during the past eight short years of existence. The number of post offices and postal agencies steadily increased so that what was an urban-centered mail service has become truly a national system. It has introduced air mail, parcel post, new year mail, acceptance time certificate, postal money order, postal transfer, postal savings account, postal life insurance, and many other related services. Not only the whole organization but also the entire personnel have been completely modernized.

Under the Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement of December 26, 1935, all Japanese post offices then operating within the territory of Manchoukuo outside of the South Manchuria Railway Zone were liquidated and transferred to Manchoukuo, while a gradual transfer of those within the South Manchuria Railway Zone had been agreed upon. This latter task had been completed when on December 1, 1937, Japan relinquished her extraterritorial rights in Manchoukuo and her administrative rights over the South Manchuria Railway Zone. After a period of adjustment

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covering three months, during which period Japanese postage stamps were honored, all Japanese post offices within the boundary of Manchoukuo disappeared. And thus, the postal administration throughout the length and breadth of Manchoukuo were completely unified and nationalized. Japan was the first to recognize Manchoukuo and her postal autonomy. The Sino-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement of December, 1934, restored the normal postal relations between Manchoukuo and China. Germany, Italy, Hungary, El Salvador, Poland, Russia, the Vatican, and Thailand followed Japan in either formally or virtually recognizing Manchoukuo, and thereby. restored normal postal relations between Manchoukuo and these countries. Manchoukuo still remains outside of the International Postal Union, but her mails with her unique postage stamps seem to penetrate the four corners of the world without much difficulty.

It may be added that the Manchoukuo regular postage rates underwent several changes during the past eight short years. To illustrate with the first class mails: at first, the basic domestic rates were 4 fen for letters and 2 fen for post cards, while the basic foreign rates were 25 fen for letters and 15 fen for cards. These rates were reduced in March, 1934, to 3 fen and 1½ fen respectively for domestic letters and post cards, and to 10 fen and 6 fen respectively for foreign letters and post cards. On April 1, 1937, simultaneously with the revision of postal rates in Japan, the Manchoukuo Government revived the old rates of 4 fen and 2 fen respectively for domestic letters and post cards, and enforced the new rates of 20 fen and 10 fen respectively for foreign letters and post cards. The parcel post and other rates underwent similar revisions on both occasions.

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I. THE REGULAR POSTAL ISSUES

1. *The First Regular Series.*

Fig. 2

The first set of Manchoukuo stamps was authorized for release on August 1, 1932. However, the Nanking authorities ordered the closure of all post offices in Manchuria on July 24 and the Manchoukuo Government took over the postal administration on July 26. Necessarily, the new stamps were actually put into use on July 26, six days before the authorized date of issue.

The first regular series of Manchoukuo stamps consisted of eighteen denominations as follows: ½ fen, gray brown; 1 fen, brown red; 1½ fen, lilac; 2 fen, slate; 3 fen, dull brown; 4 fen, olive green; 5 fen, green; 6 fen, rose; 7 fen, gray; 8 fen, ochre; 10 fen, orange; 13 fen, dull brown; 15 fen, rose; 16 fen, turquoise green; 20 fen, gray brown; 30 fen, orange; 50 fen, olive green; and 1 yuan, violet.

The first eleven stamps of this series depict the Paita or White Pagoda, a 13-story tower, about 250 feet in height, with images of Buddha carved on its outside walls. The Paita stands in the Paita Park in the city of Liaoyang, just forty miles south of Mukden on the South Manchuria Railway main line. This city of Liaoyang is one of the oldest cities in Manchuria, being well known since the Shang and Yin Dynasties (1770-1122 B.C.), and this historically sacred and imposing Paita, probably the most widely known among Manchurian pagodas, is the only remaining symbol of the once magnificent Kwang-yu Temple which had been

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completely destroyed. On the side columns of the stamp is shown "kaoliang", the representative agricultural product of the country. The Chinese characters on the top panel read "Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng" or "Manchoukuo Postal Administration."

The last seven stamps, from 13 fen to 1 yuan, show the portrait of His Majesty, Emperor Kang Teh, who then was Hon. Pu Yi, the Chief Executive of the New State. (For more details of his life, see the Enthronment Issue below.) The wreath of laurel branches surrounds the portrait in an oval, while the top panel encloses the same five characters as in the pagoda stamps.

These stamps were lithographed and printed by the Japanese Government Printing Bureau in Tokyo. They were designed by Yutaka Yoshida and lithographed by Miyakichi Aoki (tower) and Kurakichi Kato (portrait) of the Japanese Government Printing Bureau. They are printed on white wove paper without watermarks and come in sheets of 100 stamps. They are perforated 13 x 13½. The size of the stamps is 18.5 x 22.5 mm.

The first 2,000 sheets of this series, which number constituted the first delivery, had at the center of the bottom margin of every sheet an imprint, "Manufactured by the Japanese Government Cabinet Printing Bureau." (Figure 3) This imprint was deleted at the time of the second printing so that the bottom margin appeared blank. This explains the reason why the imprint blocks of the first regular series are very scarce and naturally much prized by the Manchoukuo specialists. It may be added that only the following thirteen denominations

Fig. 3

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had been reprinted, therefore without the imprint on the bottom center margin: ½ fen, 1 fen, 1½ fen, 2 fen, 3 fen, 4 fen, 5 fen, 6 fen, 7 fen, 8 fen, 10 fen, 13 fen, and 16 fen.

There are several plate varieties in this series. Among those which I have carefully checked may be mentioned the following:

1. Dotted "One". There is a small white dot near the base of the "1" of the "½" in the ½-fen stamp (Figure 4). This occurs four times on every sheet of 100 stamps, namely, No. 41, No. 46, No. 91, and No. 96.

Fig 4

Fig. 5

2. Hooked "One". On the 1½-fen stamp, the "1" of the "½" is hooked (Figure 5). This occurs only once, on the No. 11 stamp of the sheet with imprint. This error was corrected at the time of the second printing and it does not appear on the sheet without imprint. Only several copies of this error appear to have been preserved and it has already become one of the most sought-for errors.

3. Unbalanced "N". On the 1-fen stamp, the left vertical stroke of the "N" of "FEN" is slightly shortened at the top, thus dropping below the level of other strokes (Figure 6). This occurs only on four stamps of every sheet with the imprint, namely, on No. 22, No. 27, No. 72, and No. 77. This error was corrected on sheets without the imprint.

Fig. 6

4. Broken Line. Also on the 1-fen stamp, the thin innermost frame line surrounding the picture is broken off at the lower left near the box containing "1". This is found again only four times in every sheet without the imprint, namely, No. 3, No. 8, No. 53, and No. 58.

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Fig. 7

3. "Two" with White Streak. To the bottom left of the left box containing the numeral "2" of the 2-fen stamp, there is a diagonal white streak (Figure 7). This occurs only on four stamps of every sheet, namely, on No. 14, No. 19, No. 64, and No. 69.

Fig. 8

4. Dotted "Chêng". There is an extra white dot on the left of the character for "Chêng" (Figure 8). This occurs only on four stamps, namely, No. 43, No. 48, No. 93, and No. 98.

Fig. 9

5. Dotted "F". Again on the 2-fen stamp, there is an extra white dot below "F" of "FEN" (Figure 9). This occurs also only on four stamps, namely, No. 34, No. 39, No. 84, and No. 89.

Fig. 10

6. Broken "Two". Still on the 2-fen stamp, the character for "Two" is partly broken (Figure 10). This occurs only on No. 25, No. 30, No. 75, and No. 80 stamps.

Fig. 11

7. White Scratch. Also on the 2-fen stamp, there is a white scratch at the left end of the upper panel, to the left of the character "Chêng" (Figure 11). This occurs only on the No. 94 stamp.

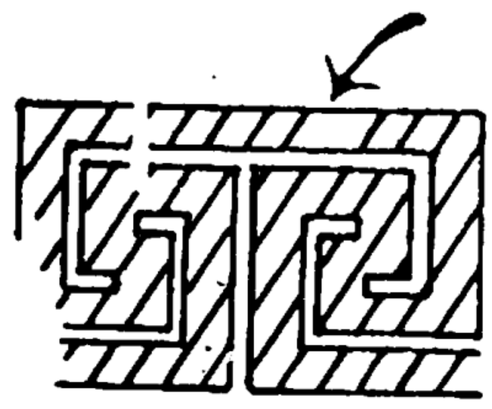

Fig. 12

8. Omitted Line. Lastly on the 2-fen stamp, one of the diagonal shading lines in the lower frame is omitted (Figure 12). This occurs only on the No. 29 stamp.

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Fig. 13

9. Broken Character. The top left half of the left side of the letter "Chêng", being the last letter in the top panel, is partly broken off (Figure 13). This occurs twice on the 7-fen sheet with imprint, namely, on the No. 86 and No. 96 stamps. It appears that this variety was corrected when the imprint had been removed.

10. Broken Tie. On the 15-fen stamp, there is a white spot on the necktie, caused by the break in one of the lines (Figure 14). This occurs on four stamps only, namely, No. 41, No. 46, No. 91, and No. 96.

Fig. 14

Fig. 15

11. White Spot on Lapel. On the 16-fen portrait stamp, the right lapel of the coat has a white, pointed spot (Figure 15). This is found only once, on the No. 89 stamp.

12. Buried Laurel Leaf. On the same 16-fen stamp, one of the laurel leaves to the left of the tied ribbon near the box containing "16 FEN", is buried in color (Figure 16). This error is found only four times on every sheet, on the No. 42, No. 47, No. 92, and No. 97 stamps.

Fig. 16

The first regular series had been printed several times, and naturally most stamps come in at least two slightly different shades. Moreover, there are differences of clear and worn out impressions according to the early or later printing.

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2. *The Second Regular Series.*

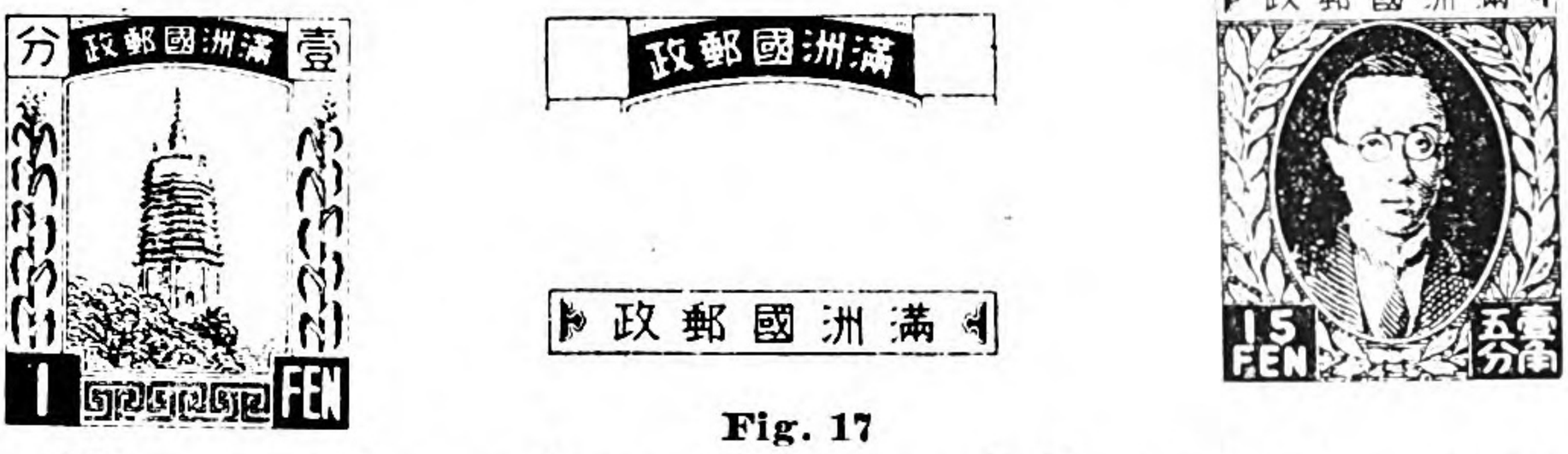

Fig. 17

The second regular series, consisting of nine stamps, was put into circulation without formal announcement in 1934. This issue continued the same two designs of the first issue: ½ fen in dark brown, 1 fen in red brown, 1½ fen in dark violet, 2 fen in slate, 3 fen in brown, 4 fen in olive green, and 10 fen in orange depicting the White Pagoda, and 15 fen in rose and 1 yuan in violet showing the portrait. These stamps also continued the "Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng" of the first issue.

Although the designs themselves were thus the same as those of the 1932 series, there are two distinguishing features peculiar to this series. In the first place, this series was engraved while the first series was lithographed, making the second series much clearer in both designs. In the second place, this series is printed on granite paper with a watermark of wavy lines while the first issue was printed on white wove paper without any watermark. In addition to the above, the portrait stamps have certain noticeable differences (Figure 19):

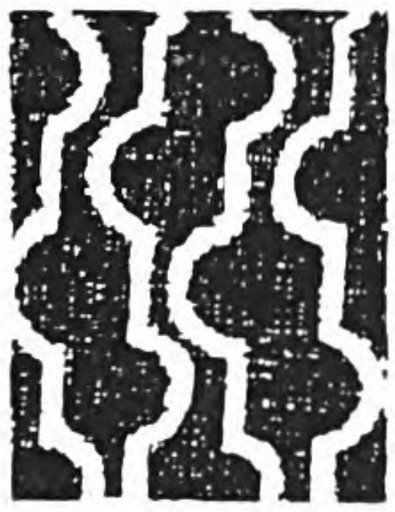

Fig. 18

Fig. 19

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	First Series	Second Series
Coat and Lapel	Straight Lines only	Shaded with Diagonal Lines
Cravat	Straight	Twisted slightly
	Right-to-Left Lines	Left-to-Right Lines
Background	Horizontal Lines	Horizontal and Diagonal Lines

The tower was engraved by Miyakichi Aoki and the portrait by Kurakichi Kato, and printed as before by the Japanese Government Printing Bureau in Tokyo. The specifications are the same as the first series.

The most well known stamp of this series is the 15-fen stamp. This denomination was used chiefly on parcel post mails, which explains the scarcity of fine used copies. Because an amazingly small number had been printed and distributed, and because it appeared and disappeared without an announcement, the mint copies of this stamp have already become a rarity among Manchoukuo stamps.

Fig. 20

On the 2-fen stamp of this series there appears a thin color line across the lower left bend of the numeral "2" as illustrated by Figure 20. Several copies of these appear to be found on every sheet but I have not been able to locate their positions.

3. *The Third Regular Series*

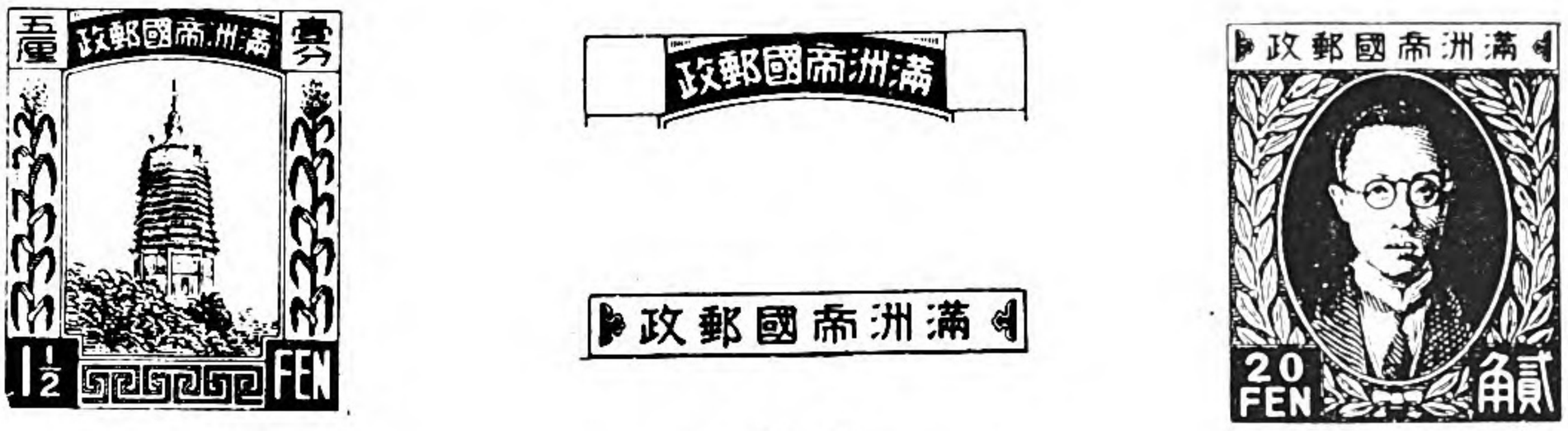

Fig. 21

With the enthronement of Chief Executive Pu Yi as Emperor Kang Teh and the subsequent change in the name

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of the era from Tatung to Kangtê, the General Postal Administration Bureau thought it advisable to replace the old stamps with new ones properly designated. Thus was conceived the third regular series which began to appear on November 1, 1934.

This third series originally consisted of thirteen stamps as follows: ½ fen, brown; 1 fen, red brown; 1½ fen, dark violet; 3 fen, brown; 5 fen, dark blue; 6 fen, rose; 9 fen, red orange; 15 fen, vermillion; 18 fen, Prussian green; 20 fen, dark brown; 30 fen, orange brown; 50 fen, olive green; and 1 yuan, dark violet. To this set were added 10 fen in deep blue and 13 fen in light brown in July, 1935, and the 5 fen in gray replacing the 5 fen in blue to avoid the confusion with the 10 fen in dark blue, and the 7 fen in dark gray in April, 1936.

The nine stamps of lower denominations through 10 fen continued the White Pagoda design and the remaining seven stamps the portrait of the Emperor. The one distinguishing feature of this series as compared with the first two series is the six characters in the top panel with the addition of "Ti": "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" or Manchou Empire Postal Administration. The paper and other specifications are the same as those of the second series.

Fig. 22

The 10 fen and 13 fen of this series, however, introduced two new features. One is the smallness of the size, namely, 18.3 x 21.5 mm. as compared with the former 18.5 x 22.5 mm. The other is the introduction of the new watermark. The granite paper used for these two stamps is watermarked with six characters, "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng", instead of wavy lines.

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The 1½ fen and 3 fen stamps of this series had been issued also in booklet form, respectively of 60 and 30 stamps each. Each pane consisted of 6 stamps. This is the first time that stamps in booklet form were issued in Manchoukuo.

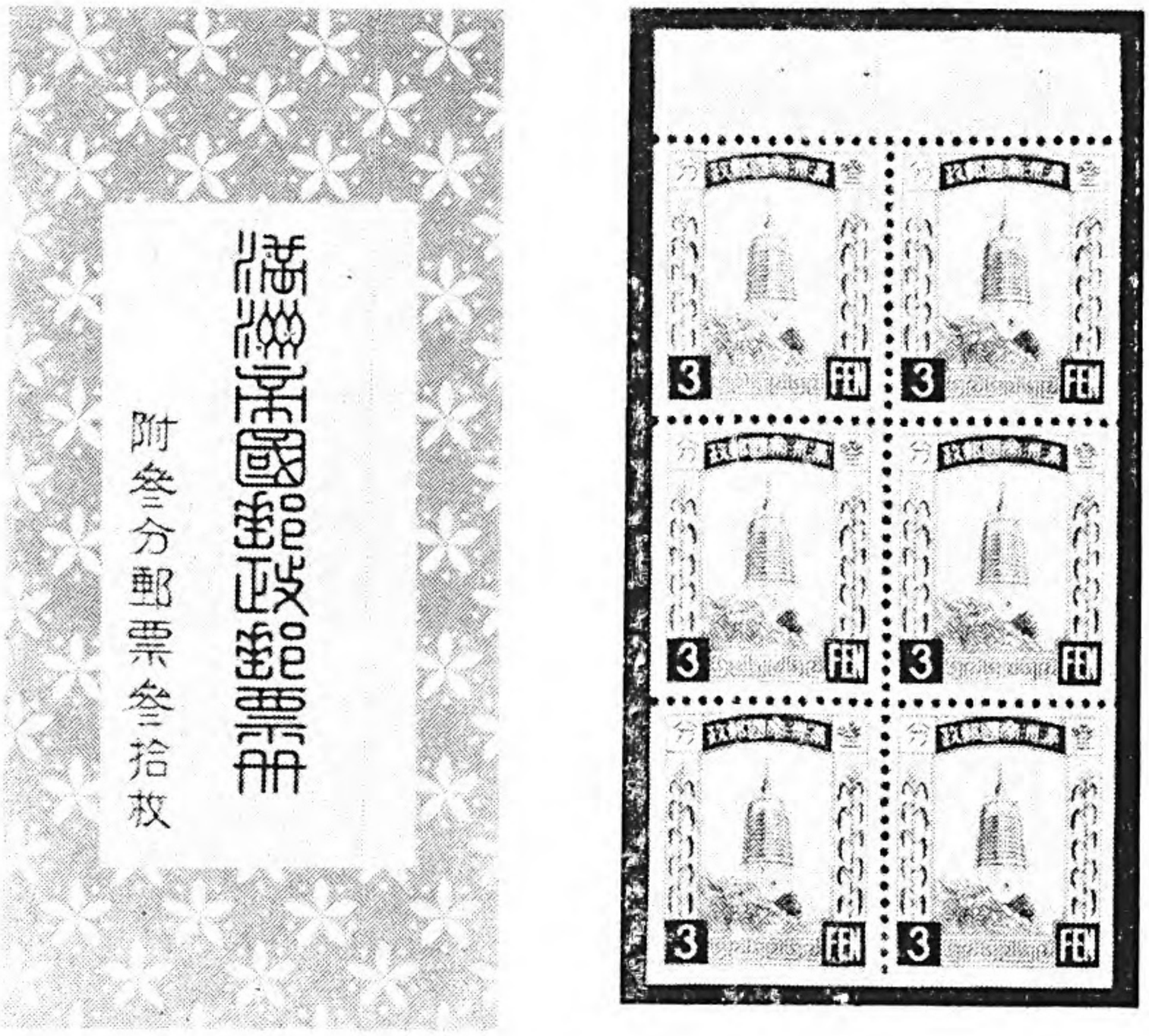

Fig. 23

The readers must be aware by this time that I have left out of this series the two much debated stamps, namely, 4 fen and 8 fen. These two stamps had actually been printed, 4 fen in olive green and 8 fen in ochre, and distributed to the Superintendents' Offices, but they had been withdrawn from official circulation as those two denominations were to be covered by the forthcoming China mail series. Whatever copies of these stamps which are today found in the hands of dealers or collectors, commanding surprisingly high prices, thus, had been originally stolen and in some cases illegally or irregularly used, and have no philatelic value whatsoever except to signify that they are illegally stolen goods.

There appears to be at least two and in some cases possibly three printings of this series and each additional print-

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ing contributed slightly different shades of color as compared with the original ones. The classic example of such a difference may be seen in the dark violet and light violet shades of the 1-yuan stamp, making them appear as if they are of two distinctive issues. In fact, a careful study of these copies will reveal that there are at least three and not two distinct shades of the 1-yuan violet. In some cases, moreover, the change in the grade of paper used produced such a difference in appearance that the later printing is often mistakenly characterized as "lithographed". The notable example of this is the 15 fen in which denomination at least three different shades can be easily distinguished. These distinctions, however, seem to have slight philatelic value, except probably the 1-yuan light violet shade.

Among the plate varieties of this series, only two seem to have been recognized as genuine:

1. Dotted "Seven". On the Chinese character "Seven of the 7-fen stamp, there appears a large colored circular dot on its top left (Figure 24). This occurs only once in a sheet of 100 stamps, namely, on the No. 10 stamp. In the later printing of this stamp, which comes in a lighter shade of gray, the dot had been removed.

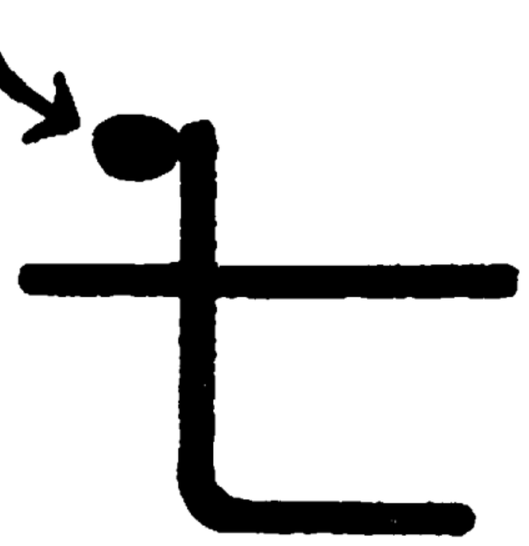

Fig. 24

Fig. 25

2. Tie with Dot. The 15-fen stamp has a small colored dot to the left of the tie (Figure 25). This occurs only on the No. 24 stamp of earlier sheets. It was removed from the later printed sheets.

I have seen also double-perforated ½-fen stamps of this series. Probably, at least ten copies of this error must have appeared but no details are known.

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4. *The Fourth Regular Series*

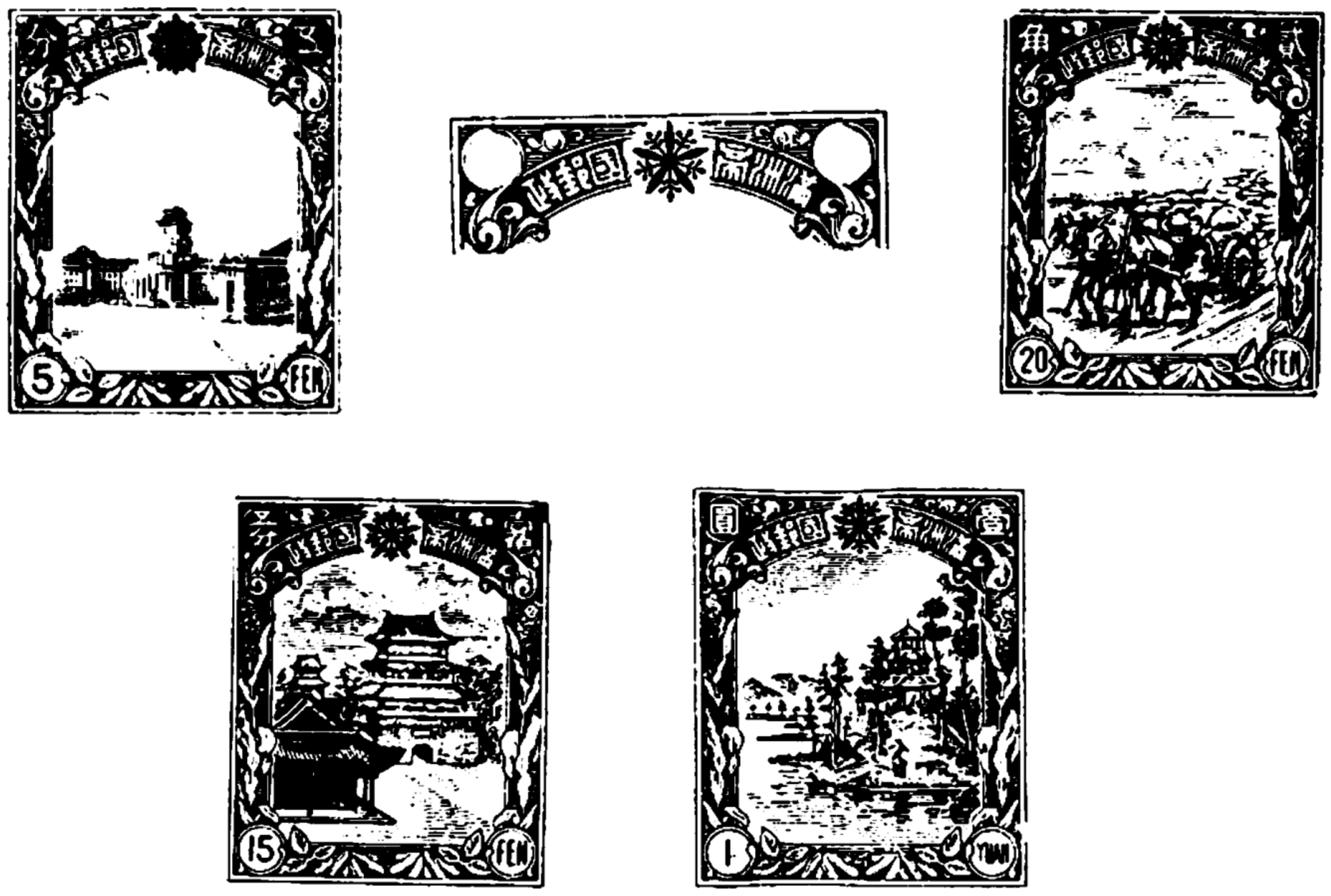

Fig. 26

The fourth regular series was released on December 5, 1936. It consisted originally of 15 stamps as follows: ½ fen, brown; 1 fen, red brown; 1½ fen, violet; 3 fen, chocolate; 5 fen, gray black; 6 fen, carmine; 7 fen, brown black; 9 fen, red orange; 10 fen, blue; 13 fen, brown; 15 fen, carmine; 20 fen, dark brown; 30 fen, chestnut brown; 50 fen, olive green; and 1 yuan, violet. To these were added 3 stamps on April 1, 1937: 2 fen, light green; 4 fen, light olive green; and 12 fen, deep orange. At the same time 1½ fen, 5 fen, and 13 fen were withdrawn from sale. The latter changes were necessitated by the change in the postage rates, including those to China.

As the White Pagoda and portrait stamps had been in use over a period of more than four years, the General Postal Administration Bureau sought new designs for this series. The result was the introduction of four new pictorials. The ½-fen, 1-fen, 1½-fen, 3-fen and 5-fen stamps depict the newly completed State Council building at Hsinking, a large and imposing structure which houses various administrative branches of the Government. The 2-fen, 6-fen, 20-fen and

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50-fen stamps picture a Manchurian farmer carting his harvest of soya beans to the market. As the soya beans constitute the chief agricultural product of the country, its selection was only natural. The 4-fen, 7-fen, 9-fen, 12-fen, 13-fen and 15-fen stamps show the famed North Mausoleum in Mukden. The North Mausoleum, or more popularly the Peiling, is located in the midst of a thick pine forest on the outskirt of Mukden. It was erected in 1644 to mark the graves of Emperor Tai-tsung, the second ruler of the Manchu Dynasty, and his Empress Consort. Naturally, it is today one of the national shrines of the country. The 10-fen, 30-fen, and 1-yuan stamps show a portion of the Detached Palace at Chengte or Jehol City. It is the former summer retreat of the Chinese Imperial House and the birthplace of Emperor Chien-lung. The walls, thirteen miles in circumference, enclose the erstwhile imperial hunting grounds dotted with lakes and hills, palaces and pagodas, bridges and arborial retreats. The gorgeous scale of the Detached Palace, now practically in ruins, vivifies the heyday of the Ching Dynasty in China.

This series brought into general use the Imperial crest of orchids which was used so effectively in representing Manchoukuo in the issues commemorating the Emperor's visit to Japan in April, 1935, and the Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement in December, 1935. Replacing the top panels of the first three series, the new set has the Imperial crest at the top center with "Man Chou Ti" at the right and "Kuo Yu Chêng" at the left. The remainder of the frame, same in all stamps of this series, has kaoliang stalks on both vertical sides and soya beans at the bottom, again emphasizing the two leading agricultural products of the country.

These stamps are printed on a granite paper with the watermark of six characters, "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng". The perforations are 13 and the size remains 18.5 x 22.5 mm. The designs are by the General Postal Administration Bureau, the drawing by Hirozo Oya, the engraving by

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Kikuji Nakata, and the printing by the Government Printing Office. There were plate numbers at the bottom center margin of every sheet at first, but later removed. They were revived in some denominations in recent printings.

There are four booklets in this series. At first, the 1½ fen and 3 fen were issued in booklets, respectively of 60 and 30 stamps each in panes of 6 stamps. These were replaced by the booklets of 2 fen and 4 fen when the postage rates were changed. These also contained 60 and 30 stamps each in panes of 6 stamps. The format is same as the first two booklets. The 1½-fen and 3-fen booklets were on sale for such a short period and replaced without notice that very few copies remain today. Eespecially rare is the 3-fen booklet and, naturally, it commands an unusually high price when found.

While there appears to be no plate variety worth noting in this series, at least two grades of paper are used and this deserves a special notation. At first, the thickness of the paper used in this series was .08 of an inch or thereabout. Sometime in 1939 there began to appear thinner paper which measured roughly .07 or .06 of an inch or even less. By 1940 all denominations of this series were printed on the thinner papers. In each case, however, the watermark of six characters remained the same.

In the course of the summer months of 1938 an employee of the Government Printing Office at Hsinking, backed by an organized group of profit-seeking Chinese collectors and dealers, smuggled out of the printing establishment sheets after sheets, all without perforations or with diagonally applied perforations. These imperforate or diagonally perforated sheets were of ½-fen, 1-fen, 2-fen, and 4-fen denominations. The robbery was contrived in a most skillful manner and it was detected only through the quick-witted action of a Manchoukuo specialist to whom were offered one 1-fen imperforate sheet and one 4-fen diagonally perforated sheet at a fabulous price. An immediate round up

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of the perpetrators of this amazing crime was made and the group was prosecuted after the recovery of almost all of the stolen sheets. Unfortunately, a portion of the ½-fen imperforate sheets had been shipped by a Russian dealer in Harbin to dealers and collectors in America, and some of them still remain unrecalled, although most of the collectors returned them intact. It was without doubt the boldest attempt in modern postal history to rob the Government and to deceive stamp collectors throughout the world.

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II. THE CHINA MAIL ISSUES

Because she did not recognize the independence of Manchoukuo, China refused to accept mails emanating from Manchoukuo. For some time after the founding of Manchoukuo, thus, the exchange of mails between these two countries was made possible only through the intermediary of the Japanese post office in Dairen which is in the Japanese Leased Territory of Kwantung. This caused considerable inconvenience to the residents of both countries. Especially true was this in Manchoukuo as China, refusing to recognize the Manchoukuo stamps, collected full postage rates as dues on all mail at the points of destination. To remedy this situation, Manchoukuo and China were brought together through the good offices of Japan to enter into a workable postal agreement. The result was the Sino-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement of December, 1934, which restored the normal postal relations between the two countries. The chief bearing which this agreement had upon the Manchoukuo postage stamps is the issuance of the "nameless" or "face saving" stamps.

1. *The First China Mail Series*

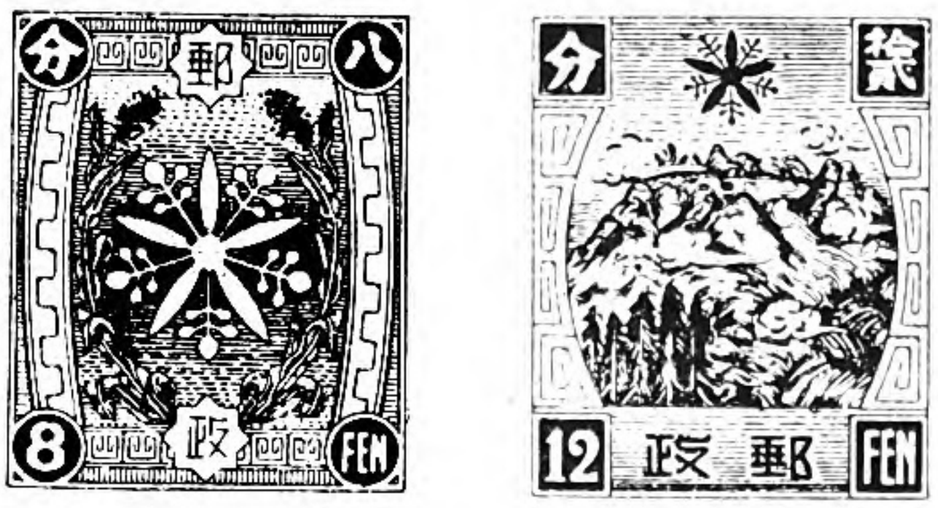

Fig. 27

In accordance with the terms of the Sino-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement, a set of four stamps to be used primarily to pay postage to China was issued on January 1, 1935, and put into actual use from January 10, 1935. The first day cover should bear the second date. This set consisted of 2 fen in green, 4 fen in dull olive green, 8 fen in ochre, and 12 fen in dull red.

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The chief feature of these stamps is the elimination of the name of Manchoukuo to save China's face. In its place, two designs clearly indicative of the country of issue were adopted. The 2-fen and 8-fen stamps present the Manchoukuo Imperial Crest adapted from the orchid flower in the center between two stalks of kaoliang. At the top center is the character "Yu" and the bottom center "Chêng", together meaning "Postal Administration." The 4-fen and 12-fen stamps depict the sacred Changpai Mountain whose majestic height of 8,992 feet towers far above the clouds near the Manchoukuo-Chosen boundary line. This mountain has at its summit a fresh water lake and gave birth to many legends which are still revered by the people in general. At the top is placed the Imperial crest and at the bottom the inscription "Yu Chêng".

These stamps were printed on granite paper with the watermark of parallel zig-zag lines. They were designed by Hirozo Oya and printed by the Manchou Central Bank Printing Plant then at Mukden. Specifications remain the same as the regular issues. The perforations are 13.

Fig. 28

The most interesting thing about this series, philatelically speaking of course, is the fact that sets

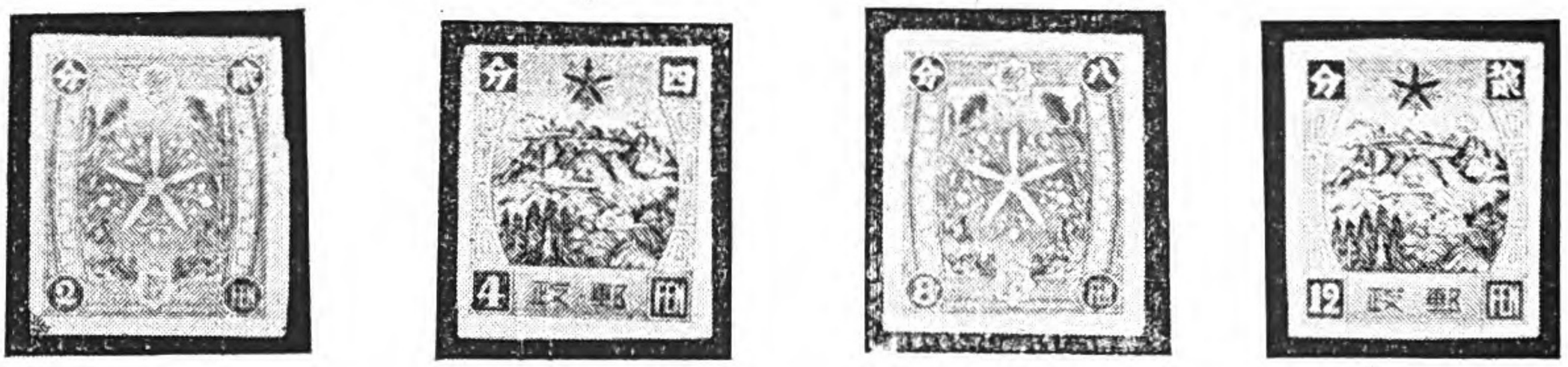

Fig. 29

in imperforate condition had been officially given out to the press at the time of the issue as a part of the publicity work. Newspaper men at the time evidently did not appreciate and realize the true value of such items and most of them seem

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to have gone into the waste baskets. Obviously, only a few copies, if at all, appear to have been preserved by sheer chance and these have become prized possessions of the Manchoukuo specialists. This explains the reason why attempts have been made to produce imperforate sets by trimming the perforated copies!

This first series has given us a few interesting plate varieties. The more attractive ones may be summarized as follows:

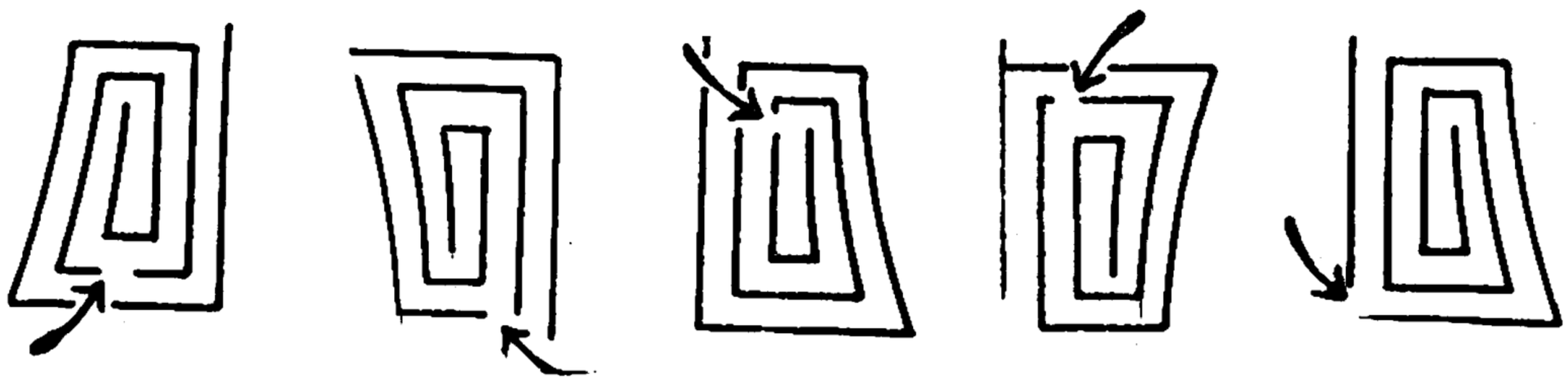
1. Filled Corner. On the 2-fen stamp, one of the corners of the left vertical column adjoining the lower left circle containing "2" is filled in (Figure 30). This filled corner variety occurs only once in a sheet of 100 stamps, namely, on the No. 79 stamp.

Fig. 30

Fig. 31

2. Extra Stroke of Line. Again on the 2-fen stamp, there is an extra stroke of line jutting down vertically slightly below the middle of the right column (Figure 31). This occurs only on three stamps, namely, No. 4, No. 13, and No. 72.

3. Broken Lines. The 4 fen stamps have several plate varieties of broken lines. These varieties as illustrated by Figure 32 are found as follows: the Figure "A" on the No.



A **B** **C** **D** **E**

Fig. 32

17 stamp, the Figure "B" on the No. 18 stamp, the Figure "C" on the No. 28 stamp, the Figure "D" on the No. 25

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stamp, and the Figure "E" on the No. 96 stamp, all to be found on every sheet.

4. Broken and Perverted Lines. The 12-fen stamps also have several broken lines. These are illustrated by Figure 33. The Figure "A" occurs on the No. 2 stamp, the Figure "B" on the No. 17 stamp, the Figure "C" on the No. 10 stamp, the Figure "D" on the No. 82 stamp, and the Figure "E" on the No. 94 stamps, all being constant on every sheet.

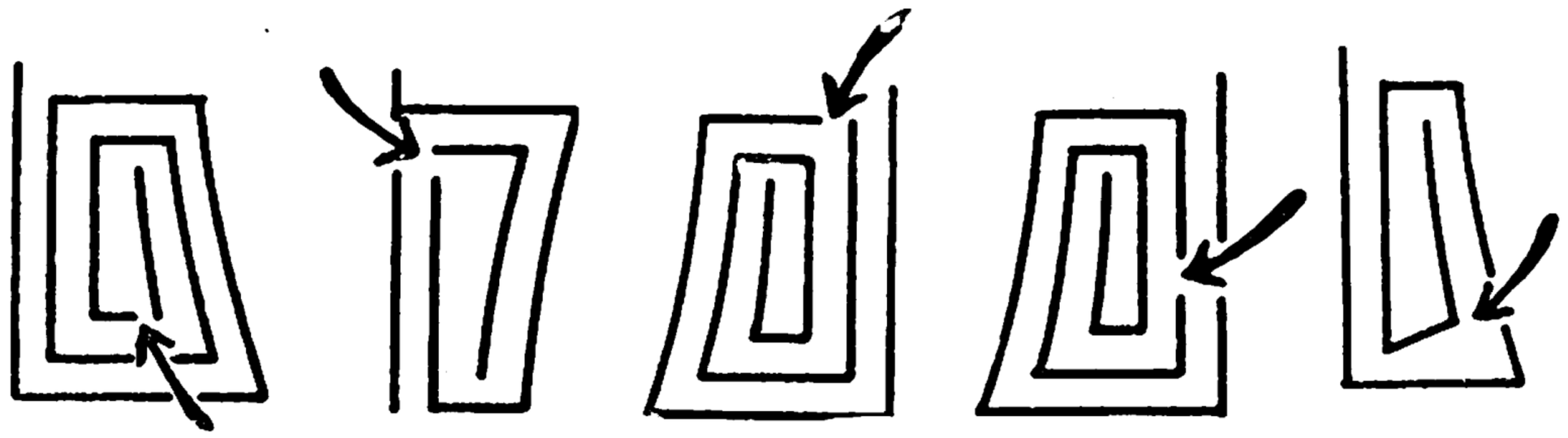

Fig. 33

Besides these plate varieties, there are to be found several shades of each stamp. Especially true is this of the 2-fen and 4-fen stamps. The 2-fen stamps are found in both dull or bluish green and yellow green shades, while the 4-fen stamps come in dull and bright olive green shades.

There are also offset copies in which the pictures in reverse are shown clearly on the back. I have seen clear copies of this variety for 4-fen and 12-fen.

It may be added here that the 2-fen stamp of this series in mint condition is becoming harder to find, although plenty exist in used condition. Consequently, it is fast becoming a scarce item to find in the Far Eastern Market.

2. The Second China Mail Series

In March, 1935, the China mail stamps in new watermarked paper began to appear without an announcement. The paper used was granite with the watermark of six characters which was introduced with the 10 fen and 13 fen of the third regular series.

Of this group, only three denominations appeared, namely, the 2 fen, 8 fen, and 12 fen. The designs and colors remained the same as those of the first series, probably the

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same plates being used, although there are slight differences in shades. All specifications are the same as those of the first series.

The 4-fen stamp continued to appear in the original zig-zag watermarked paper of the first series. The later printing of this stamp, however, can be easily distinguished from that of the earlier printing as the olive green color of the later issue is much brighter as compared with the earlier issue which was duller in tone.

Necessarily, there are similar plate varieties in this series as those of the first. The "Filled Corner" and "Extra Stroke" varieties of the 2-fen stamp, and the two of the "Broken Line" varieties of the 12-fen stamps (Figure 33), "A" and "C" above, are all to be found in this series also. In addition, there appeared the following additional notable plate varieties:

Fig. 34

1. Open "Fen". On the 2-fen stamp, the two lower strokes of the character for "Fen" on the upper right corner is usually connected with a white line. This connecting line is missing on the No. 10 stamp of every sheet (Figure 34).

2. Petal with Color Spot. On the Imperial crest of the 8-fen stamp, one of the five petals shooting toward the left upper corner has a decided color spot (Figure 35). This occurs only on the No. 86 stamp of every sheet.

Fig. 35

3. Joined Lines. On the 12-fen stamp, one stamp has the two lines on the right center joined together with an extra line (Figure 36-A). This occurs only on the No. 66 stamp of every sheet. Incidentally, there is a protruding color spot on the top center

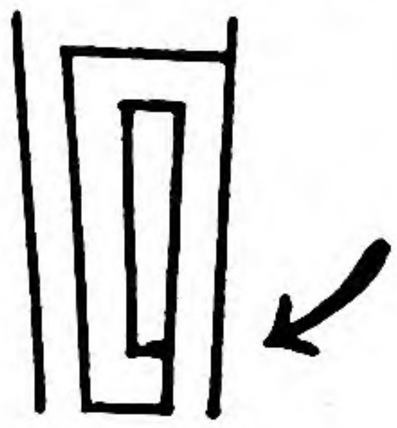

Fig. 36A

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of the upper right box of this same stamp, giving two varieties in one.

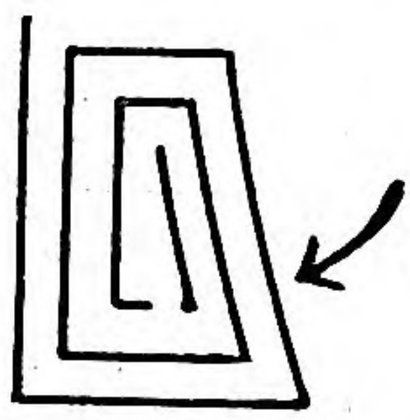

Fig. 36B

4. Brocken Lines. There are two brocken-line varieties on the 12-fen stamps in addition to those already noted above. The one illustrated by Figure 36-B is found on the No. 2 stamp, while the other one illustrated by Figure 36-C appears on the No. 10 stamp.

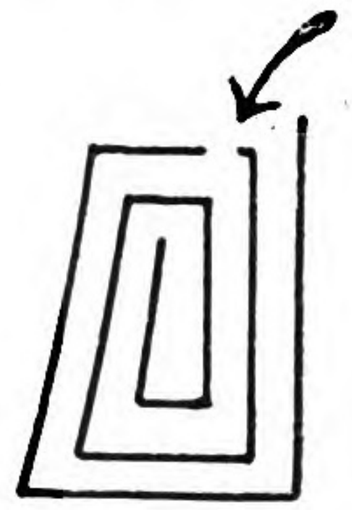

Fig. 36C

3. *The Third China Mail Scrics*

Fig. 37

Without any announcement as before, there began to appear in 1936 the new series of China mail stamps. These consisted of the same four denominations and they appeared as follows: 2 fen in January, 8 fen and 12 fen in March, and 4 fen in December.

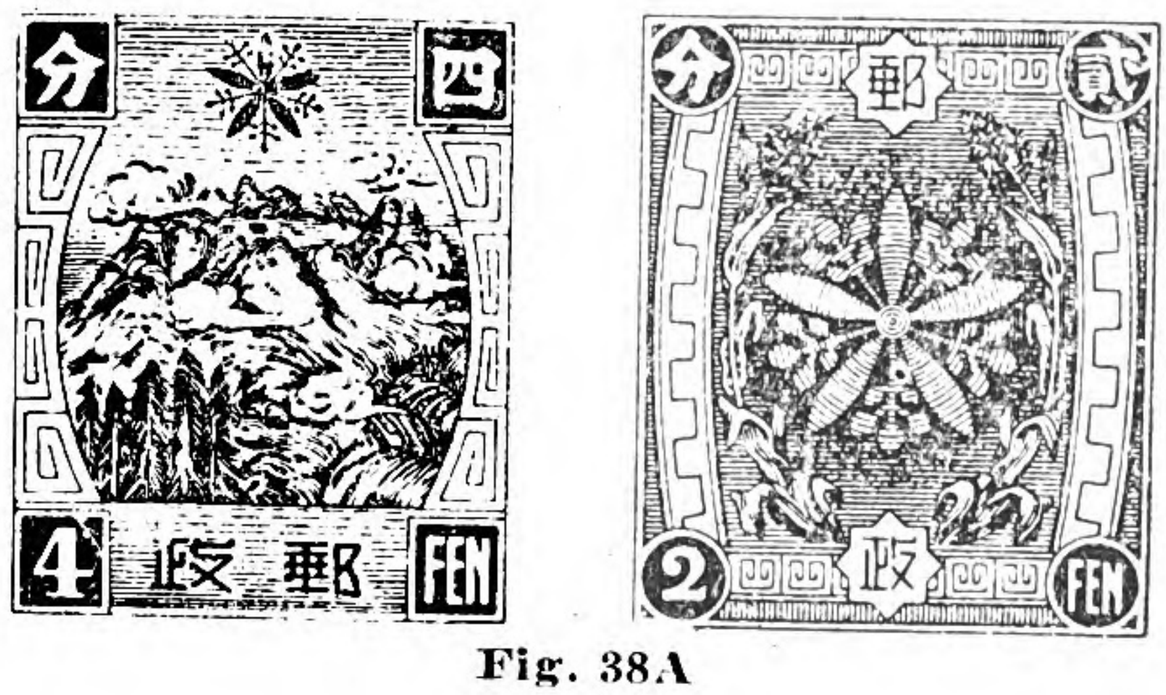

Fig. 38A

The chief distinguishing features of the third series are the method of printing and the shades. Unlike the first two series which had been lithographed, the third series was engraved on the granite paper with the watermark of six characters. The Imperial crest in the 2-fen and 8-fen stamps has wider petals which are shaded in

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entirety with parallel circular lines, while the background is covered with unbroken parallel lines throughout. In the 4-fen and 12-fen stamps, all lines immediately above the peak of the mountain had been removed, the lines in the lake at the top had been lessened, and the contours of the mountain had been strengthened and made heavier in shaded portions so that the clouds stand out much clearer.

Fig. 38B

There are also decided differences in shades of all stamps. The new 2 fen is in bright light green, whereas it was in plain dull green in the two previous series; the 4 fen is in bright olive green, whereas it was dull olive green before; the 8 fen is in "brownish" ochre, whereas it was "orange" ochre before; and the 12 fen is bright orange brown as compared with the dull red of its predecessors. It may be added also that there are two distinct shades of the 2 fen green, yellowish green and bluish green, and of the 8 fen ochre, yellowish ochre and brownish ochre. All specifications of this series are the same as those of the previous series. The engraving was executed by Kikuji Nakata.

The 12 fen of this series in mint condition is gradually becoming one of the rarer stamps on the Manchoukuo list. This may be explained by the fact that the supply of the old series was abundant at the time of issue and that the unsold balance had been recalled and surcharged early in 1937. This explains the high market value of this stamp.

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4. *The Fourth China Mail Series*

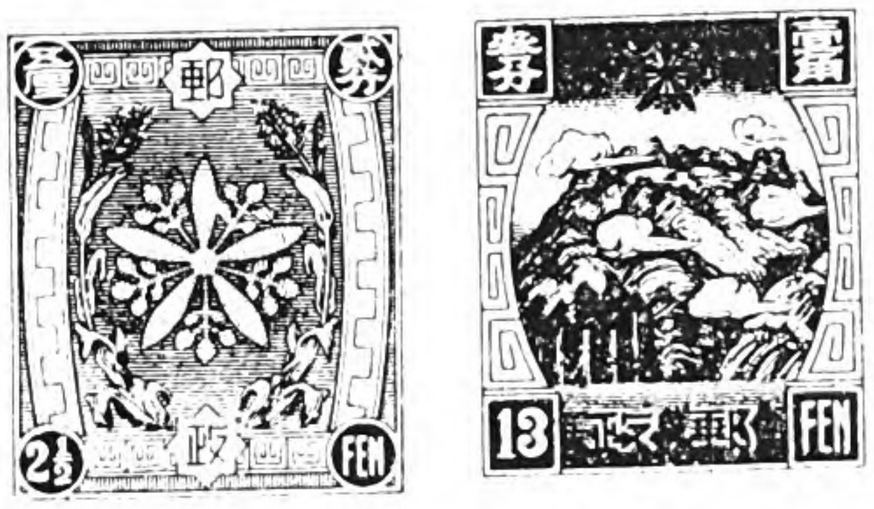

Fig. 39

There was a general revision of postage rates including those to China on April 1, 1937. This necessitated the issuance of a set of three new values for the China mail. These were 2½ fen, 5 fen, and 13 fen, whereas the 8 fen of the previous series has been retained and continued. These new stamps were delayed in the preparation and distribution, however, and several surcharged stamps were locally issued for temporary use as noted elsewhere under the "Fourth Surcharged Series."

The designs, the paper, and the process of printing remained the same as those of the third series. The 2½ fen continued the Imperial crest design of the previous issue in reddish purple, while the 5 fen and 13 fen continued the Changpai Mountain, the former in indigo and the latter in brown. The 8 fen in ochre was retained unchanged except for slight differences in shades. These were prepared at the Government Printing Office in Hsinking.

It should be noted that there are again the various shades in this series. The 2½-fen stamps come in dull and bright reddish purple, 5 fen in bluish and blackish indigo, and the 13 fen in dark and light reddish brown. There are also differences in the thickness of the paper, the earlier ones in thicker and the later ones in thinner paper, just as in the case of the fourth regular series.

It should be noted also that the so-called "5 fen in purplish-brown" is a chemical changeling. Necessarily, there is no mint copy of this "variety" in existence. In fact one

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American chemist actually produced several shades of brown and green from the 5-fen indigo copies! What is purported to be an official announcement of the error dated July 25, 1938, is nothing but a circular which tried to ascertain, in the face of persistent rumors, if ever such stamps had been actually handled by any local post offices. It was one of the boldest strokes of forgery to deceive collectors and many a specialist sacrificed a large sum for it.

Several plate varieties of this issue, especially those of the 5 fen, have been reported. Upon careful investigations, however, it was found that they are nothing but printing freaks, mostly a result of spattering or scratching of ink while still wet. There seems to be no plate variety. The sooner we eliminate these "curiosities" and "sports" from price lists and discussions the better for philately at large.

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III. THE SURCHARGED ISSUES

The shortage in certain denominations and the over-abundance in others gave rise to surcharged issues in Manchoukuo. In some instances, the surcharged series was necessitated through the change in postage rates and the delay in preparation and delivery of new series. Incidentally, these surcharged issues provided the collectors with an endless number of varieties both major and minor.

1. *The First Surcharged Series*

暫作壹分

Fig. 40

The change in the postage rates in 1934, for example, from 4 fen to 3 fen and 2 fen to 1 fen respectively in the letter and post card rates, produced a shortage of 3-fen and 1-fen stamps and an oversupply of some, notably the 4-fen and 16 fen stamps. The result was the first surcharged issue.

The first surcharged series consisted of one denomination. It was 1-fen on the 4-fen stamps of the first regular series. In changing the 4-fen stamps to 1-fen stamps, four Chinese characters were used, namely "Chan Tso I Fên" or "Temporary Made One Fen" reading from right top to right bottom and then from left top to left bottom (Figure 40). It began to appear on June 1, 1934.

Although the color of the surcharge is officially black, an error produced a brown surcharge, thereby giving to the collectors both pure brown and black or purplish brown surcharges. The pure brown surcharge seems to be scarcer and its value is mounting with years.

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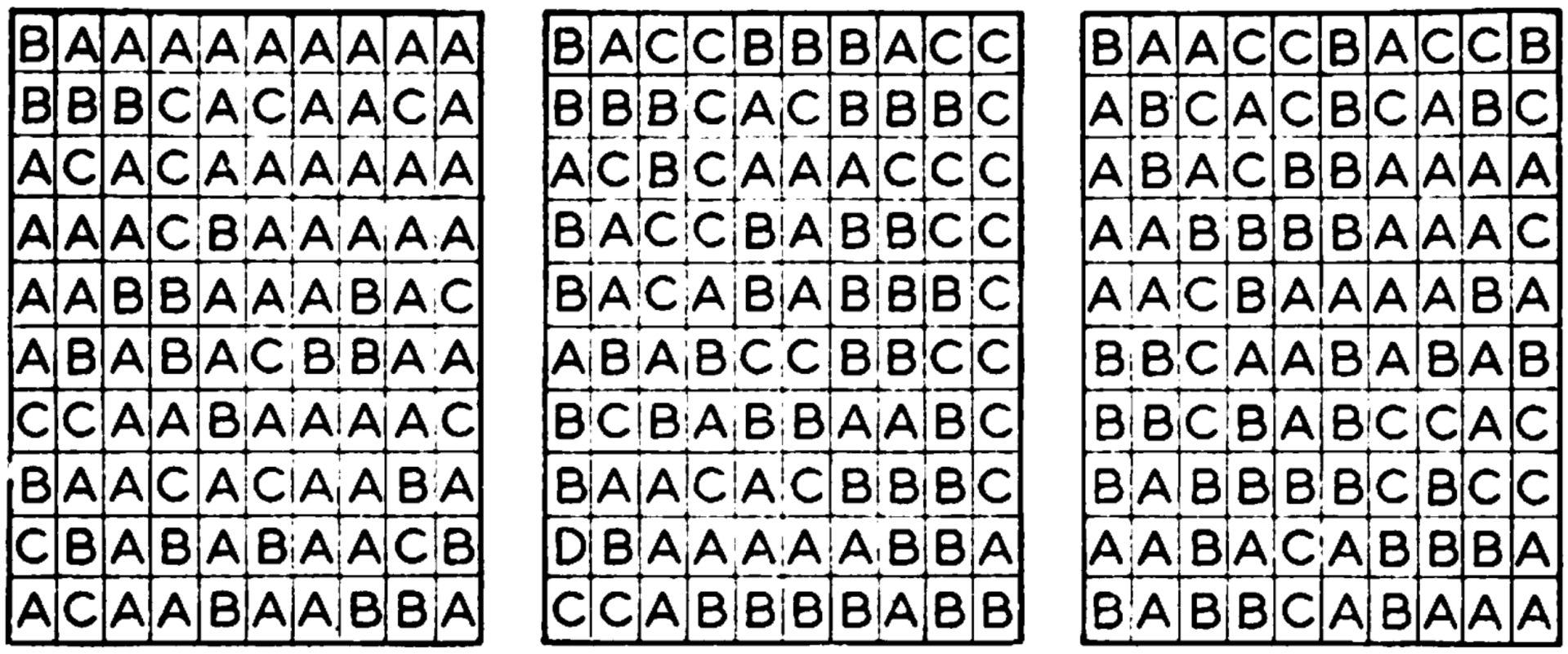
While as yet very little data is officially available concerning this surcharge, a careful examination of surcharged sheets discloses the existence of three distinct types of sheets showing either three distinct set-ups of types or places of printing, probably the former. These three different



TYPE I **TYPE II** **TYPE III**

Fig. 42

sheets, designated in Figure 42 as Type I, Type II, and Type III, may be best distinguished by the distribution of the character for "One", more specifically, by the way the last horizontal stroke of that character ends, as shown by

A *B* *C* *D*

Fig. 41

A, B, C, and D of Figure 41. In addition to this distributional difference there are decidedly different types of the character for "One" on the 81st stamp of the three sheets. These are illustrated by the accompanying reproductions of

Fig. 43

"One" in respect to the three distinguishing points which are indicated by the arrows (Figure 43).

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In addition, there are numerous irregularities and "slips" in the character for "One" in all of those three sheets. Some of these are shown in the accompanying illustrations. There are also a large number of small white spots and broken strokes in all three sheets, making them storehouses of variety, but most of them appear to be casual and not constant occurrences. The most interesting varieties of this series may be summarized under the following three categories:

1. Inverted Surcharge. I have one used copy of this inverted oddity. The surcharge is brownish black and appears to be genuine. It was discovered at Ying-kow from among thousands of used copies. Only one copy is now known but it is hoped that more copies will be eventually found.

2. Omitted Character. Decidedly unique item is a copy on which the character for "One" is completely omitted. This is on the No. 81 stamp and is in Hugh M. Clark's reference collection. It is said to have been accidentally found among several sheets received from Harbin. How it was made possible is a complete mystery.

3. Displaced Surcharges. equally interesting and extremely rare irregularities of this series are the displaced surcharges. Of these, the most valuable is the one in which the four characters of one surcharge are printed on two stamps instead of one, vertically dividing the surcharge and producing a stamp which

has the two left characters at the extreme right and the two right chracters at the extreme left edge. There are stamps upon which such a displacement is only partial. Of minor interest are those in which either the top or the bottom of the surcharge slightly runs over into the adjoining stamp.

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4. Offset Surcharge. There are stamps on which the surcharge is shown in reverse order on the back of the stamp.

2. *The Second Surcharged Series*

暫　參
作　分

Fig. 44

Changes of the first class postage rates from 4 fen to 3 fen produced the shortage of 3-fen stamps. As there was an over-abundant supply of the 16 fen of the first regular series, they were surcharged and transformed into 3-fen stamps. The method was the same as the first series, namely, "Chan Tso San Fên" or "Temporary Made Three Fen". (Figure 44). The surcharge is in black and was printed by Chikazawa Yoko of Harbin. It was issued on February 13, 1935.

A careful examination of the surcharges discloses the fact that there are three distinctly different types of the character for "3", one of them further being differentiated into two slightly different types. Those are shown by Figure 45, A, B, C, and D. The "A" or the regular "Ming" type is on the 72 stamps in a sheet of 100. The "B" and "C" are both variations of the regular "Ming" type, the "B" being 6 mm. high and the "C" 7 mm. high. There are 18 stamps with the "B" type and 8 with the "C" type. The "D" is the "Ching" type, quite different from the regular "Ming" type, and only two stamps were printed with this unique type, being the No. 10 and No. 66 stamps. These types appear constantly and their positions are indicated in the accompanying graph. Incidentally, it will be seen that the block on the upper right corner contains all of the four types. Already the type "D" is very difficult to obtain.

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A B C D

Fig. 45

A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	B	D
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	C
A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A
A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B	A
A	B	B	B	A	C	B	B	C	B
B	B	A	C	A	B	A	B	A	C
A	A	A	B	A	D	B	A	A	C
A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	A
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C

3. *The Third Surcharged Series*

三 暫

分 作

Fig. 46

The third of the surcharged series was released sometime in March, 1935. The surcharged denomination was again the 3 fen, but the simpler character for "three" with three horizontal strokes was used this time. The stamps surcharged were of two kinds, the 4 fen of the first regular series, lithographed and unwatermarked, and the 4 fen of the second regular series, engraved and watermarked. The surcharge is again in black.

It appears that the watermarked 4 fen of this group is much more common than the unwatermarked 4 fen. Naturally, the latter is more scarce and the price is necessarily higher.

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Fig. 47

A careful examination of the surcharge again shows that there are three varieties of the character for "three", as shown by Figure 47, A, B, and C. "A" is the normal type, while "B" has the left ends of the three strokes vertically aline and "C" the last stroke broken off with a dot. The "B" and "C" both occur only once in a sheet of 100 stamps, the former on the No. 52 stamp and the latter on the No. 78 stamp. All other 98 stamps have the "A" type. These three types occur of course in both the watermarked and unwatermarked stamps, at the same positions. Naturally, these varieties on the unwatermarked 4 fen are quite scarce, and are becoming highly prized by the Manchoukuo specialists.

4. *The Fourth Surcharged Series*

Fig. 48

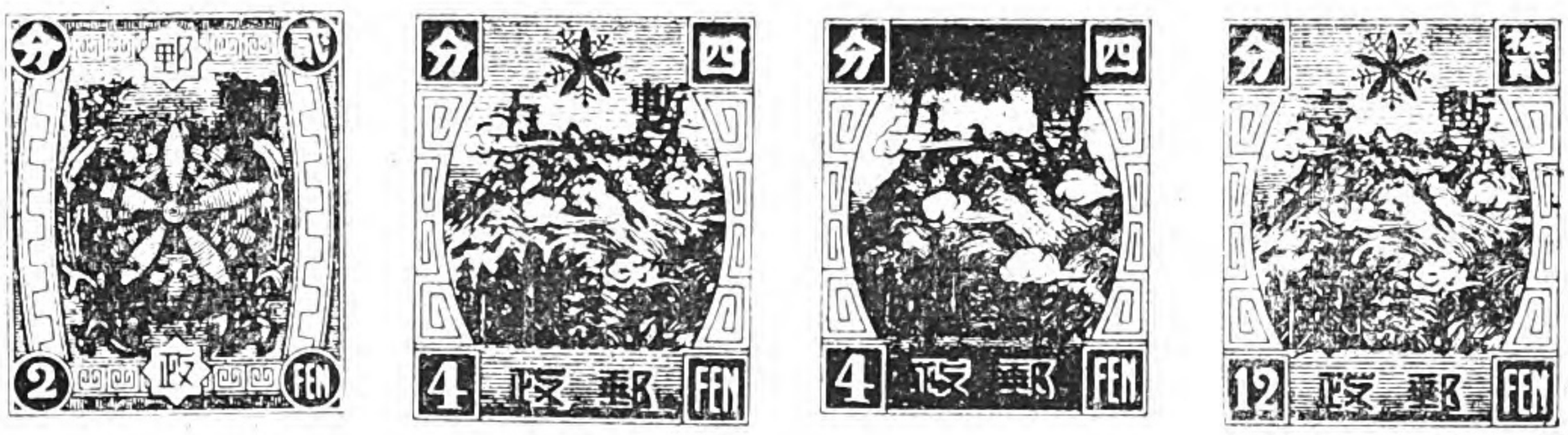

Fig. 49

The fourth surcharged series followed the alteration of postage rates to China which was done chiefly to equalize the franking charges with those of the Chinese Government.

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Early in 1937, the postal authorities recalled all China mail series then on hand, and surcharged them as the preparation and distribution of new stamps were delayed. As a result, nine different surcharged stamps appeared. For the sake of convenience, these stamps may be divided into two general groups according to the width between the two vertical characters of the surcharges. There are also differences in the form of Chinese characters used, such as the two types of the character for "two" noted later. These differences are explained to be the result of being surcharged at different local post offices. The method of surcharge is fundamentally the same as before, using "Chan Tso" with additional characters for the specific denomination.

A. Wide Spaced Group (Figure 48).

This group consists of five stamps in which the width between the two vertical lines of the characters of the surcharge is 6.5 mm. They are 2½ fen on the 2 fen of the second series, 2½ fen on the 2 fen of the third series, 5 fen on the 4 fen of the third series, 13 fen on the 12 fen of the second series, and 13 fen on the 12 fen of the third series. In the above, the character for "two" in the 2½ fen is the multi-stroked one. Of these, the 13 fen on the 12 fen of the second series seems to be very scarce and is already commanding an amazingly high prize.

B. Narrow Spaced Group (Figure 49).

In the remaining four stamps, the width between the two vertical lines of the characters of the surcharge is 4.5 mm. They are 2½ fen on the 2 fen of the third series, 5 fen on the 4 fen of the second series, 5 fen on the 4 fen of the third series, and 13 fen on the 12 fen of the second series. In this group the 2½ fen surcharge has a simpler two-stroke character for "two".

The outstanding error of the fourth surcharged series is without doubt the inverted surcharge which occurred in the case of the 2½ fen on the 2 fen of the third series,

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yellow green with a narrow space. Only one sheet with this error had been rported and it has become one of the highly prized possessions of the Manchoukuo specialists.

Another equally interesting variety is the diagonal surcharges, incidentally missing some of the stamps. An outstanding example of this group is the 5 fen on the 4 fen of the third series, narrow space. Evidently, the 40 stamps to the right of the sheet had been torn off to the bottom margin and the surcharge was applied while this block of stamps was opened out or flying off.

There are all kinds of displaced or shifted surcharges. Some of them are displaced to the right or to the left so that the surcharges are completely transposed, the right vertical characters at the left and the left ones at the right.

Similarly, the upward or downward displacements produced upward or downward transpositions. There are also diag-

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onal displacements, thereby producing peculiar looking diagonal shifts. In some cases, a certain portion of the surcharge is so thin that it appears as if a character or two had been left out. These may be prized or detested according to the taste of the collectors.

Among the varieties of characters may be mentioned the following:

1. Broken "Five". The left top half of the first horizontal stroke in the character for "Five" is broken off (Figure 50). This occurs only once in a sheet of 100 stamps, on the No. 68 stamp of 5 fen on the 4 fen of both second and third series, narrow space. There are some sheets in which perfect "five" appears on the No. 68 stamps, pointing to the probability that the stroke was broken off in the course of the printing.

Fig. 50

2. Horned "Chiao". On the 13 fen on the 12 fen of the second series, narrow space, the character for "chiao" has a hook-like addition on a downward stroke at the lower left (Figure 51). The No. 47 stamp is the only one on which this variety appears.

Fig. 51

3. Offset Surcharge. There are surcharges which appear in reverse manner on the back. I have seen this variety on 2½ fen on the 2 fen of the third series, narrow space, and 5 fen on the 4 fen of the third series, also narrow space.

It should be added that there are numerous broken characters when all surcharges are carefully examined. In most cases, they appear to have been produced in the course of the printing through the break or bend in types. Those who are specially interested in these items will find this surcharged series again a mine of varieties as in the case of the first surcharged series.

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IV. THE NEW YEAR STAMP

Fig. 52

The peoples in the Far East prize the new year greetings as highly as the western countries do the Christmas greetings. In Japan, special new year stamps for 1936 and 1937 were tried with an unexpected success and the Manchoukuo Government introduced it in 1937, to be used for the 1938 new year cards.

This special new year stamp was of the 2-fen denomination. It is a beautifully recess-printed stamp in bi-colors of blue borders and red center. The blue borders are made up of pictorialized Chinese characters "Shuang Hsi". These characters signify "doubled joy" or "doubled happiness." In the center, a similar character is printed in red over the blue background of the dawning sky. At the top is the usual Imperial Crest with "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" directly underneath. Below the red "Shuang Hsi" is given the date, "Kangte Fifth Year." The size of the stamp is 22 x 27 mm. It is printed on white wove paper without watermark. It is perforated 12 x 12½ and comes in a sheet of 70 stamps. It was designed by Shoichi Iijima and Hirozo Oya, being drawn by the latter, and printed by the Government Printing Office in Hsinking.

This special new year stamp was issued on December 15, 1937, to be used exclusively on new year cards to be delivered on January 1, 1938, and on general mails after the

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New Year. It was reported that 20,000,000 copies had been issued.

Of this stamp, there exist the double impression of the blue border, the offset of the central red characters, and the shifted perforations. It is said that the double impression of the central red characters exists but I have not yet seen it.

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V. THE COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES

The Manchoukuo Government has issued to date twelve sets of commemorative stamps. These commemorative issues are most fascinating, not only because they are so beautiful and unique, but also because they so well portray the story of Manchoukuo's gradual but most healthful coming of age.

1. *The First Anniversary Issue*

Fig. 53

The first anniversary of the founding of Manchoukuo fell on March 1, 1933. It was marked with gala ceremonies at Hsinking, her capital, and throughout the country. The air was full of jubilant spirit and promise. To commemorate this historic event, the Department of Communications issued a set of four beautifully lithographed stamps in 4 denominations of 1 fen, 2 fen, 4 fen, and 10 fen. These constitute the first commemorative stamps of Manchoukuo.

The 1-fen stamp in dull orange and 4-fen stamp in light red represent the map of Manchoukuo with the crossed flags of the country above and the laurel wreath signifying victory and achievement around it. In the center are inscribed the characters "Chien Kuo I Nien Chi Nien", meaning "Commemoration of the First Anniversary of the Founding of the State", and over the map in the background are shown two characters "Man Chou" or "Manchuria." Across

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the top panel are five characters "Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng"-or "Manchoukuo Postal Administration." The characters showing denominations in four corners complete the design.

The 2-fen stamp in dull green and 10-fen stamp in deep blue depict the historic old State Council Hall which witnessed all political activities during the first year of Manchoukuo's statehood. On the frame is shown the prevailing feeling of peace and plenty—peace by a pair of doves in flight and plenty by soya beans, which constitute the chief agricultural product of the land, producing over 60 per cent of the total world production. Across the top panel is written "Chien Kuo I Nien Chi Nien" and in the bottom panel "Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng." Again the denominational characters in four corners complete the stamp.

These stamps were designed by the General Postal Administration Bureau at Hsinking. The 1-fen and 4-fen stamps were lithographed by Miyakichi Aoki and 2-fen and 10-fen stamps by Kurakichi Kato, while the lettering was executed by Seiji Wakabayashi, all of the Japanese Government Printing Bureau in Tokyo, where the stamps were printed. Each denomination was printed in a sheet of 100 stamps on white wove paper without watermark and with 12½ perforations.

The most amazing thing about this issue is the smallness of the number issued: 1 fen, 500,000; 2 fen, 80,000; 4 fen, 600,000, and 10 fen, 50,000. Because of such a small number of issue, this commemorative set already is becoming scarce, the 2-fen and 10-fen values especially commanding extremely high prices.

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On the day of issue, the General Postal Administration Bureau provided post offices with a special cancellation. This is illustrated by the accompanying cut. The four large characters in the center circle read "Kuo Yün Mien Chang," which means "Perpetuity of Nationhood." The top group of characters signify "Commemoration of the First Anniversary of the Founding of Manchoukuo." Below are given the name of the post office and the date which should be March 1, 2nd year of Tatung, corresponding to 1933.

Fig. 54

It may be added here that the General Postal Administration Bureau soon ran out of the supply of this First Anniversary Issue and had the reprint of the entire set made in July, 1935. These reprints, however, were used exclusively for exhibition and presentation purposes and were not sold in public. They came, this time, in sheets of 20 stamps, four horizontally and five vertically. Needless to add, there are marked differences as compared with the stamps of original issue in colors, sizes, paper, and gum. These eventually may become prized possessions of the Manchoukuo specialists in the future.

Fig. 55

This First Anniversary Issue is a mine of fascinating research for those who are interested in plate varieties. There are, in fact, many varieties in each of the four stamps, and only the outstanding ones are described hereunder.

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A. Varieties of One Fen

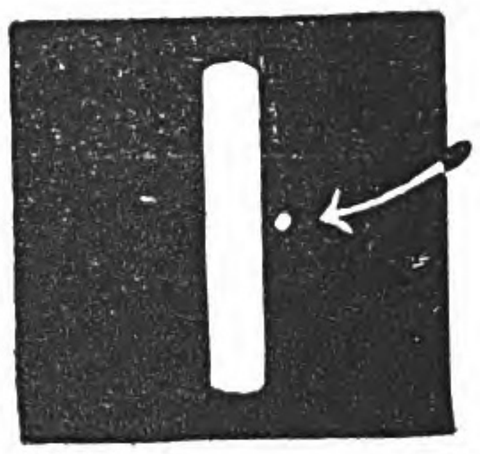

Fig. 56

1. Dotted "One". There is a small white dot to the right of the numeral 1 (Figure 56). This occurs only once on the No. 32 stamp.

2. Broken "One". The top center of the Chinese character for "One" in the upper right box is broken (Figure 57). This occurs also only once, on the No. 56 stamp.

Fig. 57

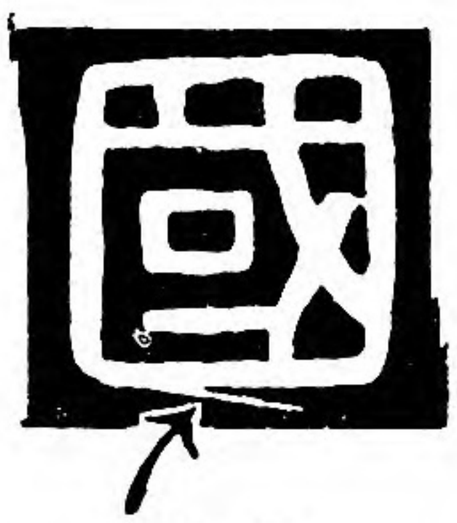

Fig. 58

3. Streaked "Kuo". The bottom of the Chinese character for "Kuo" in the upper panel has a thread-like white streak (Figure 58). This is found also only once, on the No. 23 stamp.

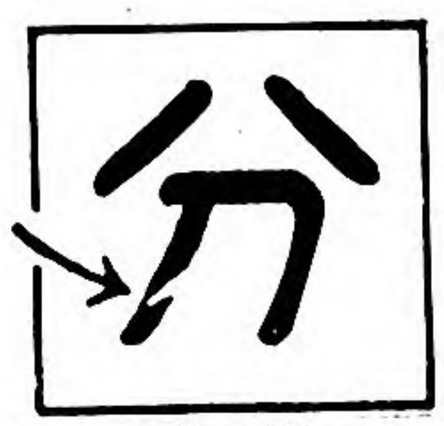

Fig. 59

4. Broken "Fen". The lower left stroke of the character for "Fen" in the upper left box is partly broken or marked with a white streak (Figure 59). This is only on the No. 90 stamp.

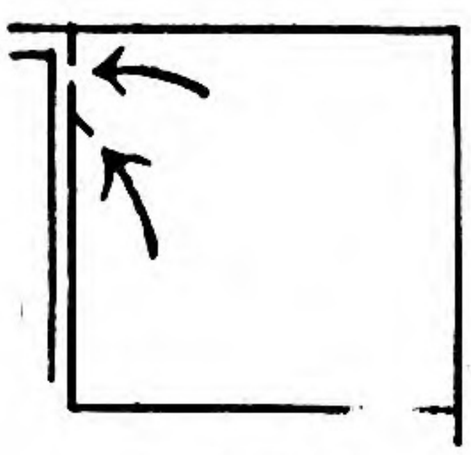

Fig. 60

5. Broken Box. The upper right box containing the character for "One" has the upper left side broken off and an extra line sticking out directly below (Figure 60). This occurs ten times on every sheet, namely, on the No. 5, No. 10, No. 25, No. 30, No. 45, No. 50, No. 65, No. 70, No. 85, and No. 90 stamps.

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B. Varieties of Two Fen

1. Broken "Two". There are two types of the broken character for "Two". One has the first upper horizontal stroke broken off toward the left (Figure 61). This occurs ten times in every sheet, namely, on the No. 12, No. 17, No. 32, No. 37, No. 52, No. 57, No. 72, No. 77, No. 92, and No. 97 stamps. The others have the lower diagonal stroke broken off (Figure 62). This occurs only once, on the No. 47 stamp.

Fig. 61

Fig. 62

2. Stringed Pigeon. The right pigeon has a white streak connecting its breast and the white panel below as if it is strung (Figure 63). This oddity occurs only once, on the No. 33 stamp of every sheet.

Fig. 63

3. Broken "Kuo". The square-like part within the upper one of the characters for "Kuo" is broken off (Figure 64). This occurs also only once, on the No. 100 stamp.

Fig. 64

4. Broken Flag. A part of the line on the left side of the flag is broken off (Figure 65). This occurs on ten stamps, namely, on the No. 12, No. 17, No. 32, No. 37, No. 52, No. 57, No. 72, No. 77, No. 92, and No. 97 stamps.

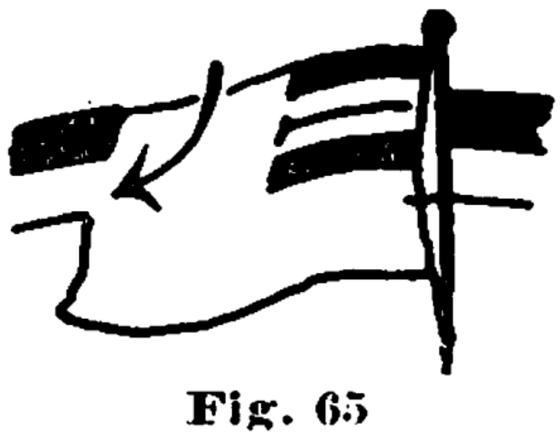

Fig. 65

5. Broken Flag Pole. The flag pole is broken off toward the top (Figure 66). This occurs also ten times, namely, on the No. 13, No. 18, No. 33, No. 38, No. 53, No. 58, No. 73, No. 78, No. 93, and No. 98 stamps.

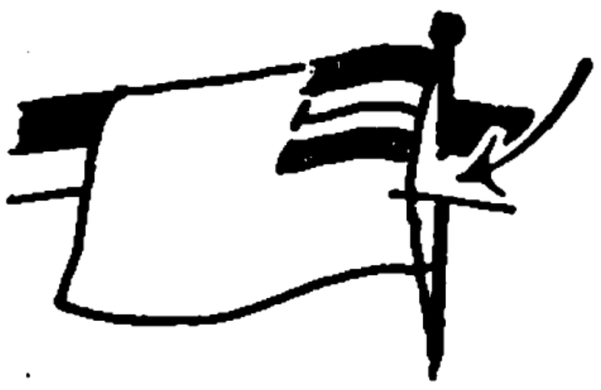

Fig. 66

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6. Spotted "2". There is a color spot on the Arabic numeral "2" (Figure 67). This is found also ten times, on the same ten stamps which contain the broken flag pole.

Fig. 67

Fig. 68

7. Streaked "2". There are two types of this variety. In one, there is a thin thread-like white streak to the right of the numeral "2" (Figure 68). This occurs only once, on the No. 26 stamp. In the other, there is a white streak near the top right of the numeral "2" (Figure 69). This occurs also only once, on the No. 41 stamp.

Fig. 69

Fig. 70

8. White Spot on Building. There is a small white spot toward the left portion of the building (Figure 70). This is found again only once, on the No. 89 stamp.

9. White Spot in Box. There is a small white spot in the colored box at the right bottom corner (Figure 71). This occurs only once, on the No. 15 stamp of every sheet.

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C. *Varieties of Four Fen*

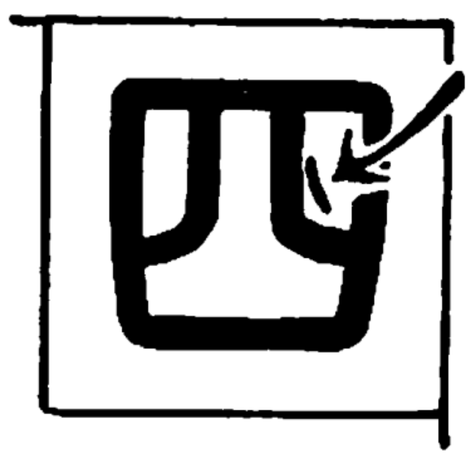

Fig. 72

1. Extra-Stroked "Four". The character for "Four" has an extra stroke inside the upper right space (Figure 72). This occurs only once, on the No. 88 stamp of every sheet.

2. White Streaked "Chou Kuo". There is a white thread-like streak running through the lower portion of the two characters "Chou Kuo" (Figure 73). This is found only once in every sheet, on the No. 26 stamp.

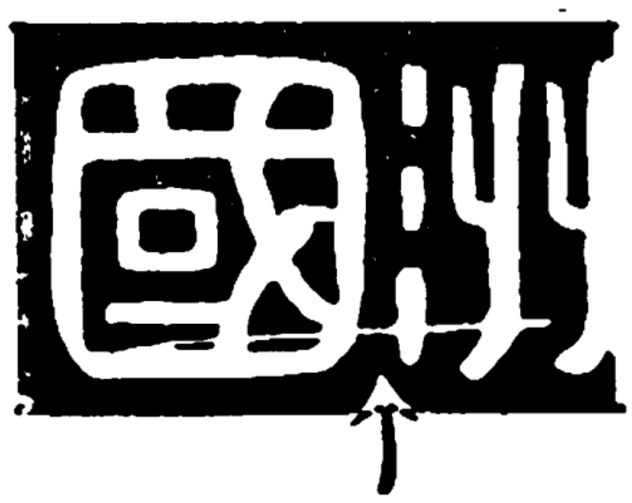

Fig. 73

Fig. 74

3. Dented "Kuo". The lower portion of the character "Kuo" is dented with color (Figure 74). This occurs ten times, namely, on the No. 5, No. 10, No. 25, No. 30, No. 45, No. 50, No. 65, No. 70, No. 85, and No. 90 stamps.

4. "E"-shaped "F". The lower portion of "F" has a slight white toe, making it appear more like "E" (Figure 75). This occurs only once, on the No. 57 stamp of every sheet.

Fig. 75

Fig. 76

5. Varieties of "N". There are two types of knobbed "N". In one, there is a white knob at the lower left side (Figure 76), while in the other there is a white knob at

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the left top (Figure 77). The former is on the No. 44 stamp and the latter on the No. 87 stamp, both occurring only once in every sheet.

Fig. 77

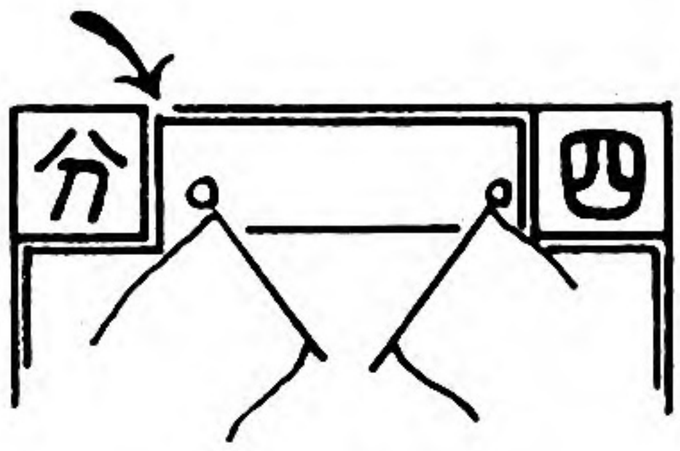

Fig. 78

6. Broken Frame. The upper frame line is broken off at the point where it joins the box containing the character for "Fen" (Figure 78). This is found only once, on the No. 6 stamp of every sheet.

D. Varieties of Ten Fen

Fig. 79

1. Broken Wing. The pigeon on the upper left has a color spot at the point where the wing joins the body, thereby making it appear as if the wing is broken off (Figure 79). This occurs ten times in every sheet, namely, on the No. 13, No. 18, No. 33, No. 38, No. 53, No. 58, No. 73, No. 78, No. 93, and No. 98 stamps.

2. White Spot on Wing Tip. There is a small white spot near the tip of the wing of the right upper pigeon (Figure 80). This is found again ten times, on the No. 15, No. 20, No. 35, No. 40, No. 55, No. 60, No. 75, No. 80, No. 95, and No. 100 stamps.

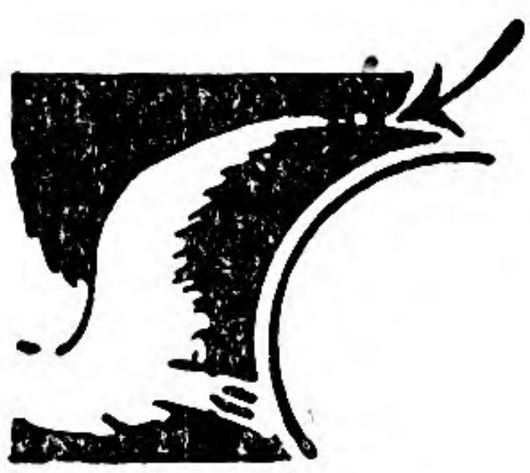

Fig. 80

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Fig. 81

3. Broken "Nien". The lower portion of the character "Nien" is broken off slightly (Figure 81). This occurs ten times also, on the No. 4, No. 9, No. 24, No. 29, No. 44, No. 49, No. 64, No. 69, No. 84, and No. 89 stamps.

4. Broken "One". The left portion of the last stroke in the character for "One" is broken (Figure 82). This occurs only once, on the No. 47 stamp.

Fig. 82

Fig. 83

5. Broken "Chiao". The lower portion of the vertical central stroke of the character "Chiao" is broken, (Figure 83). This occurs ten times, namely, on the No. 3, No. 8, No. 23, No. 28, No. 43, No. 48, No. 63, No. 68, No. 83, and No. 88 stamps.

6. "10" with Extra Line. To the lower right of the "0" of 10, there is an extra color line (Figure 84). This occurs only once, on the No. 34 stamp.

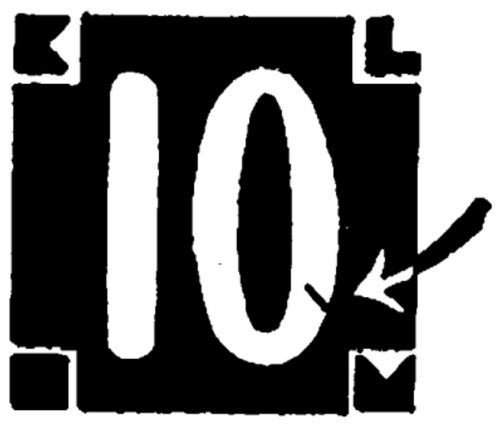

Fig. 84

Fig. 85

7. Bulging Box. The colored box at the extreme lower left corner bulges out toward the left (Figure 85). This is found on ten stamps, namely, on the No. 4, No. 9, No. 24, No. 29, No. 44, No. 49, No. 64, No. 69, No. 84, and No. 89 stamps.

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Fig. 86

8. White Niche above "One". There is a white pointed niche just above the circle enclosing the character for "One" (Figure 86). This is found eleven times, namely, on the No. 11, No. 16, No. 31, No. 36, No. 51, No. 56, No. 71, No. 76, No. 90, No. 91, and No. 96 stamps.

2. *The Enthronement Issue*

Fig. 87

The second commemorative issue of Manchoukuo was released on March 1, 1934. It was in commemoration of the enthronement of Emperor Kang Teh.

At the time of the founding of Manchoukuo, the office of the Chief Executive, the highest office in the youthful State, was filled by the Honorable Pu Yi, the former Emperor of China. After a lapse of two years, it was decided to transform the country into an Empire and Chief Executive Pu Yi was enthroned as Emperor Kang Teh. This transformation was a most rational and natural one for the simple reason that Manchuria is the home of the Manchus and that Chief Executive Pu Yi is the last but deposed Emperor of the Ching Dynasty.

It will be recalled that the Manchus had conquered China in 1644 and established the Ching Dynasty with its capital at Peking. The Ching Emperors ruled over the country for two hundred and sixty-eight years until 1912. In that year, the Chinese Republic was set up as a result of the Revolution of 1911 and Emperor Hsuan Tung, then merely six

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years old, was deposed. The deposed Emperor then resumed his personal name and became plain Pu Yi, and lived in seclusion since, both at Peking and Tientsin. It was only natural, therefore, that the last of the Manchus should be called upon to lead the liberated Manchu State and that he should be enthroned eventually as its reigning Emperor.

Such was the background upon which was projected Manchoutikuo or the Manchu Empire on March 1, 1934. Naturally there was a nation-wide rejoicing and ceremonies were held everywhere to exalt the return of the last of the Manchu Emperors. It was to epitomize such a historic event that the Department of Communications issued a set of four beautiful commemorative stamps, consisting of 1½ fen, 3 fen, 6 fen, and 10 fen.

The 1½-fen and 6-fen stamps, the former in red brown and the latter in green, auspiciously depict the Chin-min-lou of the Imperial Palace between vertical rows of laurel leaves signifying triumphant achievements. Across the top is inscribed "Têng Chi Chi Nien" or "Commemoration of Enthronement" and at the bottom "Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng" or "Manchoukuo Postal Administration."

The 3-fen stamp in carmine and 10-fen in blue, on the other hand, represent flying male and female phoenixes, the mystical birds which are symbolic of happiness and longevity, consequently quite appropriate to the occasion. The floating clouds in the background signify a heavenly atmosphere, thereby showing the exalted position of the enthroned Emperor, while two sprays of kaoliang which constitute one of the leading agricultural products of the land, second only to soya beans, represent the productive richness of the domain. The inscriptions are the same as those on the other two.

These stamps were designed by the General Postal Administration Bureau as in the case of the First Anniversary Commemoratives. The engravings of the Palace Hall were executed by Kenichi Noma and the birds by Kurakichi

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Kato, while the lettering was done by Seiji Wakabayashi, all of the Japanese Government Printing Bureau in Tokyo, where the stamps were printed. They are printed on white granite paper with the watermark of wavy lines in sheets of 100. The size of the stamps is 23.5 x 26.5 mm. and the perforations are 12½.

As there was an extraordinary demand for the First Anniversary Issue of a year ago, the General Postal Administration Bureau decided to issue a larger number for each denomination. Thus there were issued 1,000,000 copies each of the 1½-fen and 3-fen and 100,000 copies each of the 6-fen and 10-fen.

The special commemorative cancellation was authorized again for three days from March 1, 1934. In the center is the character "Hsi", which signifies happiness and rejoicing. The phoenixes and clouds show, as already described, the auspiciousness of the occasion. On the top is "Têng Chi Chi Nien" and at the bottom the date and the name of the post office.

Fig. 88

3. *The Emperor's First Japan Visitation Issue*

Fig. 89

Ever since the signing of the Japan-Manchoukuo Protocol on September 15, 1932, Japan and Manchoukuo were bound together with a definite policy of cooperation and collaboration. With the progress of reconstruction and the institution of a program of far-flung development, the Japan-Manchoukuo relationship became closer. It was to

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further strengthen such a friendly tie that His Imperial Highness Prince Chichibu, representing His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, paid the first official visit to Manchoukuo early in 1935.

To repay this Imperial visit, His Majesty, the Emperor of Manchoukuo, left Hsinking on April 2, 1935, on a historic visit to Japan. The Imperial Japanese Government placed at His Majesty's disposal the Cruiser Hiei both on his outward and homeward journeys. Upon His Majesty's return, an Imperial Rescript was issued on May 2 and the indivisible relationship between the two countries was especially emphasized.

It was to celebrate such a historical event that the Department of Communications released on April 2, 1935, a set of four commemorative stamps. The four denominations were, as before, 1½ fen, 3 fen, 6 fen, and 10 fen.

The 1½ fen in blue-green and 6 fen in beautiful carmine present a view of the famed Mt. Fuji which, in this case, may be taken as representing Japan. At the top of the design is the Manchoukuo Imperial crest of orchids with the inscription "Huang Pi Hsia Fang Jih Chi Nien," or the "Emperor's Japan Visitation Commemorative." At the bottom is the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng," together with the denominational figures.

The 3 fen in orange and 10 fen in blue picture male and female phoenixes, as in the case of the Enthronement Issue, conveying the spirit of nation-wide rejoicing. On the side at the left are shown orchids and at the right chrysanthemums, respectively being the Imperial flowers of Manchoukuo and Japan. The characters at the top and bottom are the same as in the other two denominations.

The designs for these commemorative stamps were made by the General Postal Administration Bureau. The engraving was executed by Kikuji Nakata and the printing was done at the Printing Plant of the Central Bank of Manchou at Hsinking. The perforations are 11 and the

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stamps come in sheets of seventy, 10 horizontally and 7 vertically for the 1½-fen and 6-fen stamps, and vice versa for the other two. The paper used is the usual granite paper with the watermark of six characters. The number of issue is as follows: 1½ fen, 300,000; 3 fen, 1,500,000; 6 fen, 200,000; and 10 fen 200,000.

Fig. 90

The General Postal Administration Bureau had provided post offices with a special cancellation again. This time a phoenix is flying over a sea with the rising sun, signifying the rejoicing upon the Emperor's trip across the sea to Japan. This is shown in the accompanying illustration.

The Emperor's Japan Visitation Issue is noted for some of the interesting errors and varieties. Chief among them may be mentioned the following:

1. Red Orange Three Fen. The color of the three fen is normally orange. There exists, however, a "red orange" shade, decidedly reddish so that one can easily recognize it. A very few copies of this shade seem to have been preserved.

2. Six Fen Imperforated Between. The most outstanding error of this issue is the 6 fen imperforated between.

Fig. 91

More specifically, the vertical perforations between the sixth and seventh rows of stamps of the sheet are omitted. It is said that only one or two sheets of this gem had been dis-

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covered and the 6-fen pair imperforated between has joined the rank of rarity among the Manchoukuo stamps already.

3. Part Imperforated. Equally interesting, but without doubt less important, are the part imperforate copies. I have seen the 3 fen with imperforate top margin and the 1½ fen with imperforate right margin. There must be at least 10 copies of the former and 7 copies of the latter, or the multiple thereof.

4. Irregular Perforations. The normal perforations of this issue are 11. However, the 6 fen and 10 fen values are found with 12½ and 12¼ varieties. The accompanying diagram of the 6 fen gives the positions of these irregular perforations. In the case of the 10 fen, the diagram should be turned over sidewise, seven horizontal and ten vertical stamps. One can readily see that there are several compound perforations derivable from these sheets. That only a few sheets of both 6 fen and 10 fen with these irregular perforations has been found is certain, but it is not known exactly how many sheets of each. I have not heard of a similar condition in the case of the 1½ fen or 3 fen values.

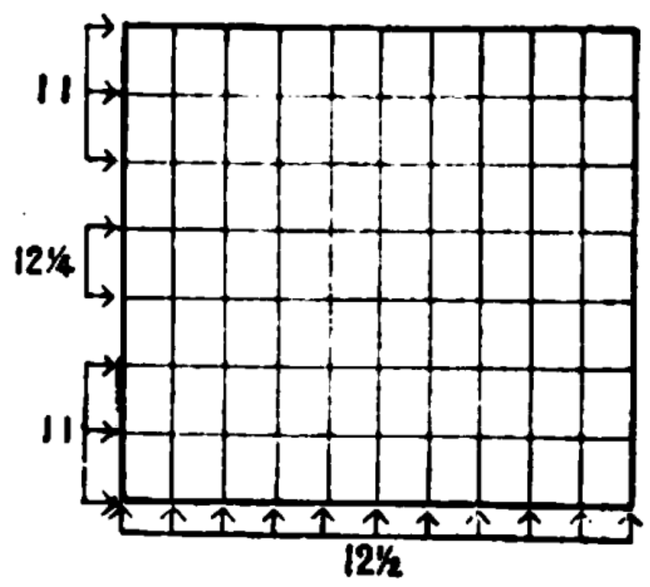

Fig. 92

5. Double Perforations. There are several double-perforated copies in this issue also. I have seen the following: 1½ fen with horizontal double perforations; 1½ fen with vertical double perforations; 6 fen with vertical double perforations. There may be others.

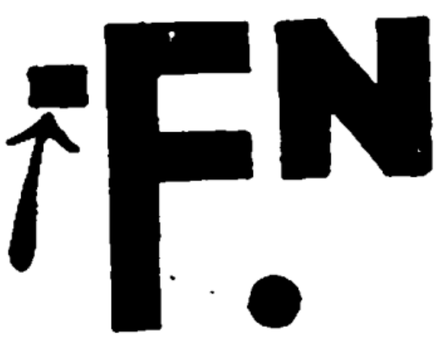

Fig. 93

6. Dotted "F". There is a small rectangular dot near the top left of "F" of "Fn" in the 1½ fen value (Figure 93). This occurs only once in a sheet of 70 stamps, being the No. 16 stamp.

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4. *The Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement Issue*

Fig. 94

Since the new Government of Manchoukuo proclaimed its postal independence from China on April 1, 1932, and took over the Chinese postal service on July 26, 1932, it has reorganized its postal service completely on a modern line and introduced numerous innovations. This marked the beginning of a new deal in postal administration over Manchuria.

The Japan-Manchoukuo through postal service was established with the Japanese recognition of the new State in September, 1932. Likewise, the Sino-Manchoukuo through postal service was started on January 10, 1935, with the introduction of a set of four "Nameless Stamps."

With the rapid growth of the new state, various conflicting postal problems began to crop up, especially in connection with the Japan-Manchoukuo through service, as Manchoukuo still remained outside of the International Postal Union due to the policy of non-recognition followed by most nations.

In order to meet such situations and to improve Japan-Manchoukuo relations, Japan took the initiative in negotiating with Manchoukuo a new postal agreement. The result was the conclusion of a Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement on December 26, 1935. It went into effect one month later, on January 26, 1936.

The Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement abolished the old postal agreements between Japan and China and placed the postal relationship between Japan and Manchoukuo on

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a level of equality. It set forth fundamental principles in regard to the Japan-Manchoukuo through postal service relating to ordinary mails, money orders, and parcel post. A detailed agreement, elaborating the fundamental principles thus established, was proclaimed in December, 1936.

It should be added here that the Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement of 1935 paved the way toward the liquidation of all Japanese post offices then operating within the territory of Manchoukuo and the gradual transfer of the Japanese postal administration within the South Manchuria Railway Zone. It also laid the basis of an eventual relinquishment of Japan's extraterritorial rights in Manchoukuo which was effected as of December 1, 1937. In this respect, it was epochal in the postal history of Manchoukuo.

It was to commemorate such a historic event that the Department of Communications issued a set of four commemoratives on January 26, 1936, the day upon which the Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement went into effect. It involved four denominations as before: 1½ fen in sepia, 3 fen in mauve, 6 fen in carmine, and 10 fen in blue.

The 1½-fen and 6-fen stamps show a map of Manchoukuo and Japan in outline with a wild goose flying over from the former to the latter, symbolic of a communication accord. The top inscription is the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng," while the bottom legend reads "Man Jih Yu Pien T'iao Yüeh Ti Shieh Chi Nien," meaning "Japan-Manchoukuo Postal Agreement Conclusion Commemorative."

The 3-fen and 10-fen adhesives depict the building which then housed the Department of Communications at Hsinking, a beautiful structure which faces one of the main boulevards of the capital. On the top left is shown the Imperial crest of Manchoukuo and on the right the chrysanthemum crest of Japan's Imperial House, signifying an accord between the two neighbors across the Japan Sea.

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The design for this issue was made by the General Postal Administration Bureau. The drawing was made by Hirozo Oya and the engraving by Kikuji Nakata. The paper used is white granite with the watermark of six characters; the perforations are 12 x 12½ and 12½ x 12; and the sheet contains 70 stamps. The printing was done at the Printing Plant of the Central Bank of Manchou at Hsinking.

The number of issue as reported was 1½ fen, 140,000; 3 fen, 840,000; 6 fen, 140,000, and 10 fen, 140,000.

As in all previous similar occasions, the General Postal Administration Bureau had provided designated post offices with a special commemorative cancellation. It shows the flags of Japan and Manchoukuo crossed under a pigeon carrying a letter upon which appears the name of the post office. On the sides is given a date.

Fig. 95

5. *The Fifth Anniversary Issue*

Fig. 96

On March 1, 1937, the Manchoukuo Government had issued a set of two commemorative stamps in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the new regime in Manchuria.

There certainly were plausible reasons for such a commemorative issue, for the first five years of Manchoukuo's statehood were marked by innumerable achievements of epochal character. The following may be taken as examples of a few of the basic accomplishments:—

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The administrative machinery was carefully reorganized from old ways to new lines and its activities were studiously solidified, especially after the enthronement of the last of the Manchus as its Emperor.

The financial foundations of the state were strengthened by the enforcement of a far-sighted program of rehabilitation, including the complete unification of currency, the rationalization and reduction of taxes, and the improvement of banking facilities. The creation and the healthy growth of the Central Bank of Manchou marked a new high watermark in the national financial strength never before witnessed in Manchuria.

Peace and order were completely restored and maintained at the expense of gradually disappearing "bandits".

The judiciary was reorganized on a modern basis for the first time in Manchurian history and was reenforced by a steady improvement in laws and courts and personnel.

Educational projects were widened and expanded and schools were increased to erase from the Machoukuo population the worst enemy of mankind, illiteracy.

The transportation system was completely unified, especially after the acquisition of the Soviet rights in the former Chinese Eastern Railway, while the highways began to add new mileage with remarkable rapidity and busses were introduced to reach the remotest parts of the country.

Communication chains, more notably the telephone and telegraph, were expanded, thereby reducing time and distance as no man ever dreamed of in Manchuria before.

The industrial life of the nation received a new lease and the studied program of controlled industrial development began to make available vast resources of the land which had been buried underground for ages past.

And with them all, construction in all fields of activities began to transform the face of the land and to improve cities with wide streets and modern buildings.

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Indeed, what Manchoukuo had accomplished during the first five years of her statehood, much of which was believed to be practically impossible under the former military regime, was nothing short of a marvel and it was only fitting that the Government should celebrate its achievements with the issue of a new commemorative set of postage stamps.

The Fifth Anniversary Issue consisted of two stamps. The 1½-fen stamp in deep red represented the rising sun over an expansive stretch of land which has received a new deal of development. The auspiciousness of this development was shown by a few strips of floating clouds. The 3-fen stamp portrayed the rise of new city civilization with its composite picture of high buildings and busy street life. On the left is shown a branch of ripening kaoliang, depicting prosperity, and on the right a spray of orchids, the Imperial flower. At the top panel on both stamps is the inscription "Chien Kuo Wu Chou Nien Chi Nien" or "Commemoration of the First Anniversary of State Establishment." At the bottom is the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng."

The design for this issue was made by the General Postal Administration Bureau and was drawn by Hirozo Oya. It was printed on white wove paper without watermark by an offset process at the Printing Plant of the Government Bureau of Supplies and Repairs, hereafter designated as the Government Printing Office. The perforations are 12½ and they come in sheets of seventy stamps. Because the paper was thin and the perforations were rough with thick gum, the stamps are easily torn, giving many headaches to collectors.

The number of issues was said to be: 1½ fen, 210,000; 3 fen, 700,000. However, in the case of the 1½-fen stamp a large number was reported to have been destroyed, due to certain defects, and the actual number of issue was much smaller than the number printed. Necessarily, the 1½-fen stamp is more expensive than the 3-fen stamp.

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The special cancellation was used as before. It has a torch in the center, with wings in front, and a wreath of laurel branches on the sides, showing the forward march of developments in the country. The subject of commemoration is at the top as in the stamps, while the name of the post office is given at the center of the wings and a date in the marked space below.

Fig. 97

There are several so-called varieties reported but most of them are printing freaks and not plate varieties. The following are worth noting, however:

1. Offset. Both in the 1½ fen and the 3 fen, there are very clear offset, showing the entire picture on the back of the stamps, of course, in reverse.

Fig. 98

2. Hooked "Chien". On the 3-fen stamp, there is a curved hook where the stroke ends in the character "Chien", the first letter at the top on the right (Figure 98). This is constant and occurs only once on the No. 2 stamp in a sheet of 70 stamps.

3. Dot near Frame. Again on the 3 fen stamp, there is a color dot just inside of the lower part of the left frame lines and the picture. This is found only on the No. 53 stamp.

6. *The Capital Construction Issue.*

Fig. 99

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The sixth commemorative issue of Manchoukuo was released on September 16, 1937, in celebration of the completion of the first five-year program of the capital construction work at Hsinking.

When Manchoukuo became independent of China in 1932, she designated the old city of Changchun as her new capital and renamed it Hsinking or "New Capital." Immediately a modern city-planning, designed to transform the city into a great metropolis befitting the capital of the new State was evolved and the first five-year project of the capital construction Bureau of the Government in March, 1932.

The work thus inaugurated has seen its gradual realization on an extensive scale and on September 16, 1937, an impressive ceremony in celebration of the successful completion of the first five-year program, at a total expenditure of 38,667,000 yuan, was held in the presence of His Majesty the Emperor amid the grandeur of the newly created Ta-tung Park.

The cause for the nation-wide celebration was to be sought both in the stupendous character of the construction work actually unfolded in the heart of erstwhile docile Manchuria and in the rapidity of development probably never before equaled elsewhere, even more striking in the speed and extent of the project than previously caught the imagination of the world when Australia started its new capital at Canberra, Turkey its new seat of government at Angora, or India the construction of New Delhi.

Hsinking in 1932 covered an area of roughly eight square miles with a population of 130,000. New Hsinking now under construction extends over an area of slightly more than seventy-seven square miles, including the old city, and envisages a population of 1,000,000.

The chief characteristic of the new capital is its wide streets. The main boulevards and secondary thoroughfares have a wide section at the center for motor traffic, with

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sections for slow vehicles on both sides of it, and wide sidewalks on the outside for pedestrians. It also includes a gigantic water supply system involving the construction of the Chingyuehtan Reservoir which was completed in October, 1935, at an expenditure of 3,500,000 yuan.

It incorporates, moreover, unlike the old towns in Manchuria, a modern sewer system which is destined to revolutionize the city's life. It embraces five beautiful parks, planned to preserve natural beauty with appropriate artificial touches to perpetuate the continental atmosphere. It has, in addition, a national museum, a huge public library, a public auditorium, botanical gardens, a zoological garden, the great Nanling Stadium as an athletic center, a horse race track, and a golf course.

Scattered all over this large metropolis are buildings of all descriptions, both governmental and private, forming a new silhouette over the rolling plains of Central Manchuria. Here one sees the characteristics of the two styles of architecture, combining the utilitarian aspects of occidental formula with the beauty of native lines. The new industrial district also reflects the rising spirit of the country, marking the transition between the old and the new. And in the center of this rejuvenated metropolis will rise the gorgeous new Imperial Palace.

Thus, in the short interval from 1932 to 1937, the people saw unfolded before them a majestic new capital of Manchoukuo, a dream city of East Asia, where there were only rambling farms before.

To advertise the gigantic nature of the capital construction work, the General Postal Administration Bureau announced a popular contest for designs to be used in its forthcoming commemorative issues. As a result, the winning designs submitted by Kosuke Ishikawa of Tokyo became the basis of the four stamps contemplated and with minor changes became the sixth commemorative issue of Manchoukuo.

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The 2 fen in dull violet and 10 fen in dull green depict a general view of the new capital and a rising sun with auspicious clouds. In the foreground is pictured a pouter pigeon with a laurel branch at the right, designating a peaceful accomplishment. At the top are sprays of kaoliang on the right and orchids on the left. The inscription in the top panel divided by the Imperial crest is "Kuo Tu Chien Shê Chi Nien" or "Capital Construction Commemorative." The lower inscription is the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng."

The 4 fen in red and 20 fen in blue also present a composite picture of new buildings in Hsinking, revealed under several beams of light from above and surrounded by a laurel branch and orchids on the right and kaoliang and soya beans on the left. In the center is shown the Manchoukuo flag. In the panel of clouds at the top, again divided by the Imperial crest, is the inscription "Kuo Tu Chien Shê Chi Nien" and at the bottom "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng."

The stamps, which were printed at the Government Printing Office at Hsinking, are on white wove paper without watermark. They come in sheets of 70 with 12 x 12½ perforations. The engraving was executed by Kikuji Nakata.

The number of issue is reported to be as follows: 2 fen, 259,000; 4 fen, 1,400,000; 10 fen, 189,000; and 20 fen, 84,000. These figures include the second printing of 49,000 each for all denominations except the 4 fen.

The special cancellation, used as before, has at the center the reproduction of the Capital Construction Bureau Building. In the background is the skyline of the rising city and in the foreground a portion of the musical scale of the Manchoukuo national anthem. At the top

Fig. 100

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is the inscription "Kuo Tu Chien Shê Chi Nien", at the bottom the post office, and on the sides a date.

Several varieties of this issue have been reported but I find that none of them are constant. Most of them appear to be the result of scratching or touching while the ink was still wet. At least, I have not found any plate varieties.

7. The Extraterritoriality Issue.

Fig. 101

December 1, 1937, will long remain a memorable day in the annals of Manchoukuo. It was on that date that Japan's extraterritorial rights in Manchoukuo and her administrative rights over the South Manchuria Railway Zone were completely relinquished in favor of the Manchoukuo Government. It was to commemorate this red letter day that the Department of Communications issued a set of six commemorative stamps, the seventh in the series.

Japan, with other Western Powers, enjoys the privilege of extraterritoriality in China. Manchoukuo, in declaring

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her independence of China in 1932, fell heir to all of China's treaty obligations so far as Manchuria was concerned and Japan continued to enjoy her extraterritorial rights in Manchoukuo and her administrative rights over the S. M. R. Zone. With a steady and brilliant progress in all phases of her national and local administration and a gradual assurance of peace and order, the Japanese Government began to feel that the retention of those rights no longer was necessary. Thus were initiated in 1934 the Japan-Manchoukuo negotiations for the abolition of those anomalous rights.

To aid her in handling this delicate and complicated question, Manchoukuo had to her credit a record of extraordinary accomplishments within the short span of her statehood. Among such achievements may be mentioned the following, which had direct effect on the question of extraterritoriality:

First, introduction of orderly and responsible administrative organization and personnel in both national and local administration.

Second, issuance and enforcement of laws and regulations governing all phases of industrial activities, thus safeguarding the productive activities of Japanese subjects in Manchoukuo.

Third, complete reorganization of the financial structure of the nation, including the unification of a tangled currency system, together with the establishment of the Central Bank of Manchou.

Fourth, complete reform and unification of the taxation system which involved abolition of corrupt feudal procedures full of graft and embezzlement.

Fifth, reorganization of judicial organs on a modern basis, codification and promulgation of various codes of laws and regulations, and improvement and perfection of the judicial personnel.

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Sixth, nationalization and unification of the decentralized police system and enforcement of natonal polce laws and regulations.

Seventh, modernization of postal administration and the communication system.

The story of negotiations involving such an epochal change naturally is long (see author's Sixth Report on Progress in Manchuria to 1939, published by the South Manchuria Railway Company) and it suffices us to note here that the progress was made rapidly.

Thus, the preliminary treaty was signed on June 10, 1936, and the final treaty was signed on November 5, 1937. By the latter treaty, which went into effect on December 1, 1937, the Japanese Government officially abolished "the right of extraterritoriality" and transferred to Manchoukuo "the administrative rights over the South Manchuria Railway Zone." So after December 1, 1937, Japanese subjects in Manchoukuo came to be governed within Manchoukuo territory by the provision of Manchoukuo laws.

To facilitate this transitional process, a special business agreement relating to the postal administration was signed on November 22, 1937, among other things permitting the use of Japanese postage stamps during the transition period of three months following December 1.

Thus passed into Manchoukuo administration former Japanese police offices, post offices and all municipal equipment in the S.M.R. Zone. With them went some 14,000 persons. All Japanese schools were turned over to the newly-created School Associations and the Federation of School Associations.

The six stamps issued necessarily portray things which have relations with the abolition of extraterritoriality and which are symbolic of the country. The 2-fen stamp, in dark red, represents the outline map of Manchoukuo; the 4-fen and 8-fen stamps, respectively in green and red orange, depict the Japanese Residents Association building in Hsin-

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king, together with sprays of soya beans, kaoliang, and orchids; the 10-fen and 20-fen stamps, respectively in light blue and lilac brown, show the new structure which houses the Department of Communications within which is located the General Postal Administration Bureau, with sprays of orchids on both sides; and the 12-fen stamp in violet presents the beautiful Department of Justice building.

All stamps have three inscriptions besides denominational figures: (1) the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" centering upon the Imperial crest; (2) "Chih Wai Fa Ch'üan Chê Fei Chi Nien," meaning "Extraterritoriality Abolition Commemorative"; and (3) the date of issue, December 1, 4th year of Kangte. The 10-fen, 12-fen, and 20-fen stamps, in addition, have the names of buildings inscribed.

The design for these stamps were made by Shoichi Iijima and Hirozo Oya and the drawings by the latter. Perforations are 12 x 12½ for 2-fen and 13 for all others. The 2-fen stamps come in sheets of 70 and all others in sheets of 50. They were printed by the Government Printing Office and every sheet bears its imprint for the first time. The paper used is plain wove without watermark. The plate numbers are given in some sheets and omitted in others.

The number of issues is understood to be: 2 fen and 4 fen, 3,000,000 each; 8 fen, 12 fen, and 20 fen, 200,000 each, and 10 fen, 500,000.

This is the first time that the Manchoukuo commemorative stamps were issued in a set of 6 and also in 3 different formats. It was also the first issue with the complete date of issue plainly inscribed.

Again the torch of progress is used in the special cancellation used with this issue. Around the torch are five bats, signifying in Manchuria "five-fold good fortune". At the top is the subject of commemoration as in

Fig. 102

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stamps themselves, at the bottom the frame of the post office, and on the sides, a date.

This issue, being printed in photogravure process, contains numerous printing oddities such as white spots and scratches. The more interesting plate varieties are the following:

A. *Varieties of 2 Fen.*

1.White Slash Below Date. There is a curved white slash under the date (Figure 103). This error appears on the No. 59 stamp of every sheet; it also occurs additionally on the No. 8 stamp of some sheets. On these stamps, there is also a dent on the upper end of the right frame line.

Fig. 103

Fig. 104

2. White Spot between Characters. Between the third and fourth characters in the central vertical group there is a white spot (Figure 104). This occurs only once, on the No. 15 stamp.

3. White Island. There is a small white spot, like an island, in the Gulf of Pechili toward the lower portion of the map. This occurs only once, on the No. 17 stamp.

4. Scratch on Map. There is a white scratch mark on the map at the extreme right center. This is found only once, on the No. 58 stamp.

5. Broken Frames. There are at least two places where the frame lines are broken. One is on the top frame, slightly left of the center, while the other is on the extreme right end of the top frame. The former is on the No. 26 stamp,

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and the latter on the No. 70 stamp, each occurring once on every sheet.

6. Offset. There is a beautiful offset, the reverse picture being shown clearly on the back.

B. *Varieties of* 4 *Fen.*

Fig. 105

1. Broken "Four". The lower right side of the character for "Four" appears to be broken off (Figure 105). This occurs only once, on the No. 4 stamp.

2. Broken "Fen". The lower portion of the last stroke of the character "Fen" is thinned out as if it is broken off (Figure 106). This appears only on the No. 28 stamp.

Fig. 106

C. *Varieties of* 10 *Fen.*

Fig. 107

1. Broken "Ch'üan". There is a white spot on the right side of the character "Ch'üan", the fourth one from the right in the bottom panel, making it appear as if it is broken (Figure 107). This occurs only the No. 5 stamp.

2. Dotted Roof. There is a colored dot toward the left top of the roof. This occurs only on the No. 40 stamp.

3. Double-Circle Dot. There is a double-circle dot just outside of the upper portion of the right frame. Just below it, at about the center, is found another color dot. There is also a wide spot under the crossing orchid leaves at the extreme upper right corner. These all occur on the No. 14 stamp.

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4. Dots and Dots. On the No. 66 stamp, there is a colored dot just inside the orchid leaf near the right upper corner. On the No. 63 and No. 69 stamps, there is a colored dot near the tip of an orchid leaf near the character "Man". On the No. 12 stamp, there is a similar colored dot within the right portion of the lower panel.

D. *Varieties of 12 Fen.*

1. Scratched Wall. A side of the outside wall toward the lower right side of the building has two white scratches. These occur only on the No. 46 stamp.

2. White Spots. Near the left corner of the upper frame lines, there is a white spot, on the frame lines on the No. 22 stamp and just below the frame lines on the No. 17 stamp.

E. *Varieties of 20 Fen.*

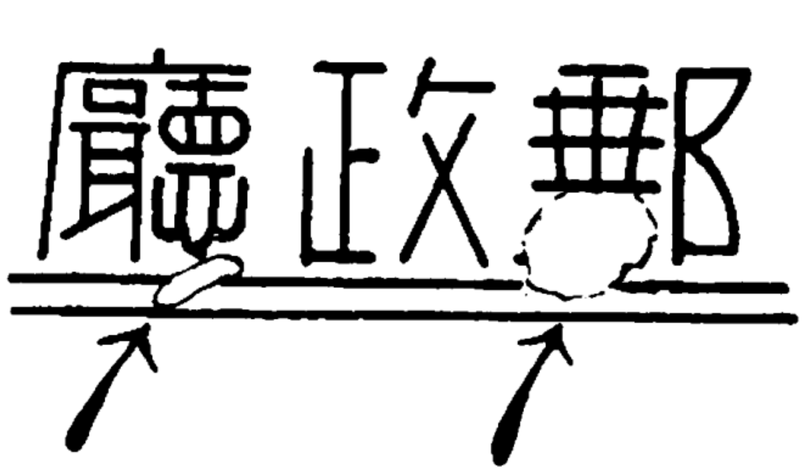

Fig. 108

1. Broken "Yu". The character "Yu" to the lower left just above the bottom panel is broken off (Figure 108). This occurs only once, on the No. 2 stamp. On this same stamp, there are also two white spots, the one below "Chow", the third character left of "Yu", and the other on the right portion of the lower frame lines.

2. Crossed "One". The character for "One" of the date on the upper right is crossed vertically with a bending color line, making it appear like the character for "Ten". This occurs only on the No. 13 stamp.

3. Broken "Chou". The character "Chou" in the top panel has a broken stroke (Figure 109). This is found only on the No. 16 stamp.

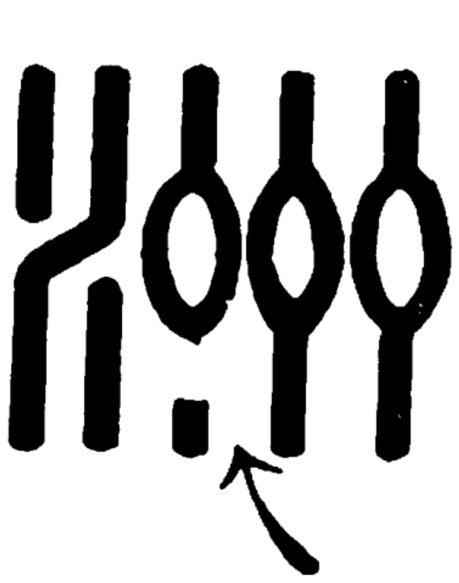

Fig. 109

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4. Broken Frame. The left portion of the upper frame lines of the bottom panel is broken off. This occurs only on the No. 22 stamp.

5. Dotted Orchid. The orchid flower at the left top corner has a color dot just above it (Figure 110). This occurs only on the No. 27 stamp.

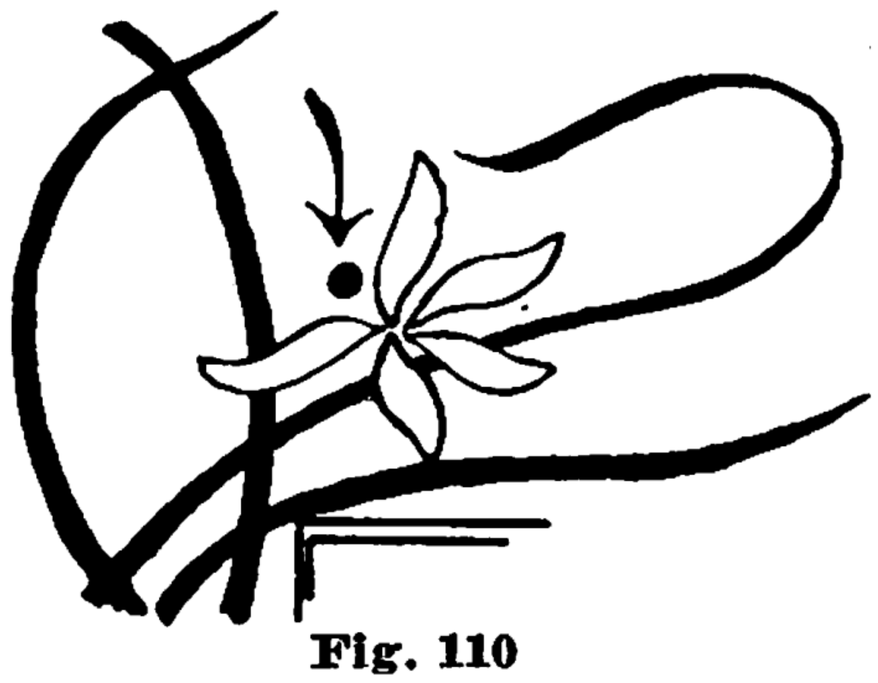

Fig. 110

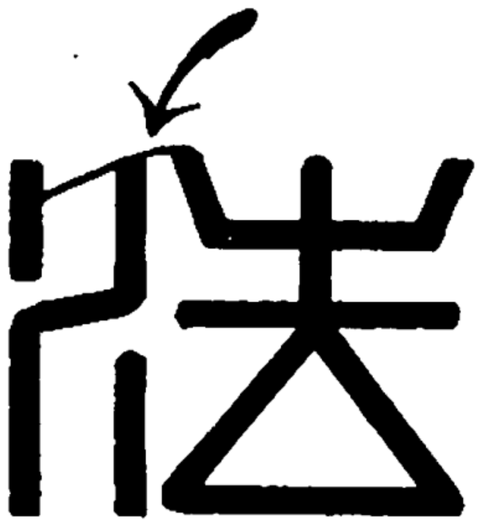

Fig. 111

6. Bridged Strokes. The upper left portion of the character "Fa" in the bottom panel is bridged together with a colored hair line (Figure 111). This is found only on the No. 28 stamp.

7. Dotted "Ti". The character "Ti" on the top panel has a colored dot on the left side (Figure 112). This occurs only on the No. 39 stamp.

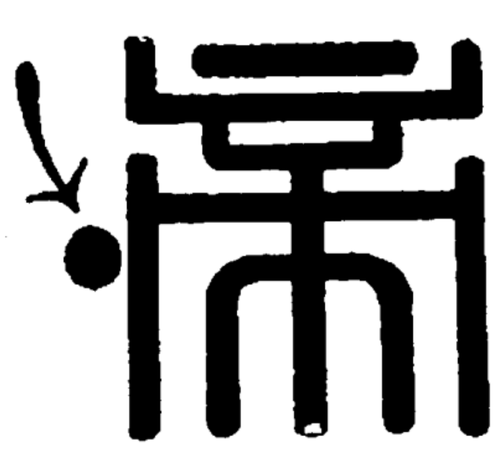

Fig. 112

8. White Spot. There is a large white spot just above the characters "12" of the date, breaking the frame lines directly above it also. This is found only on the No. 45 stamp.

8. *The Red Cross Society Issue.*

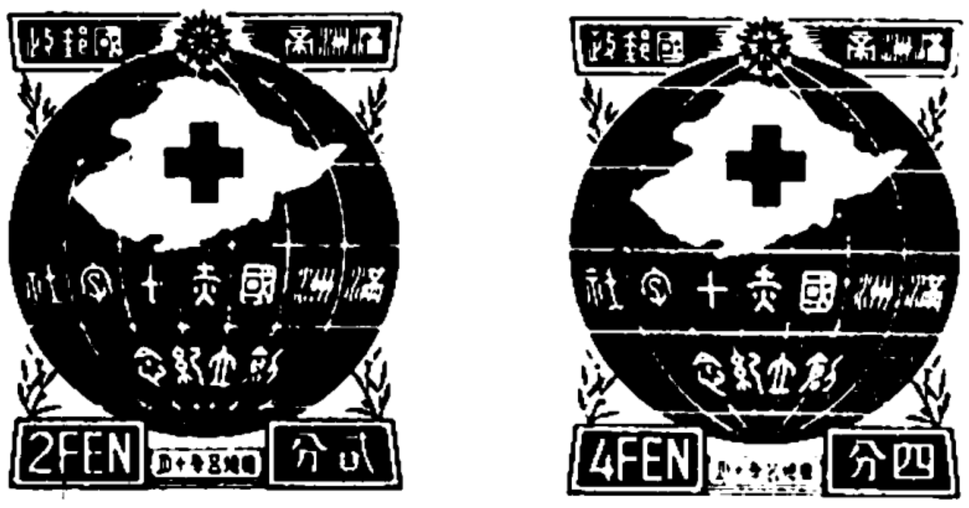

Fig. 113

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On October 15, 1938, was issued a new set of two bi-colored stamps in commemoration of the establishment of the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society. It is the eighth commemorative issue of the country.

To most philatelists of the world, the establishment of a Red Cross Society may appear to be a common event and may mean just another set of stamps; but to those of us who are familiar with Manchuria before 1932, it is a symbol of steady growth and progressive achievement. It is another milestone on the road to Manchoukuo's rejuvenated nationhood.

The Red Cross activities in Manchoukuo after 1932 have been carried on by the Japan Red Cross Society. Its branch headquarters at Hsinking directed the program of various activities all over Manchoukuo, including two fine hospitals at Mukden and Harbin. But with the steady growth of the new State, it naturally developed that Manchoukuo should organize her own red cross enterprises in line with other independent nations.

With this background, the Manchoukuo Government named a preparatory commission in July, 1937, and its chairman, after a series of preliminary conferences, went to Tokyo in December and reached an understanding with the Japan Red Cross Society on the proposed establishment of the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society. Then followed, in January, 1938, the official appointment of the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society Organization Committee with Civil Affairs Minister Sun Chi-chang as its chairman. The preparations progressed smoothly thereafter and an Imperial Ordinance proclaimed the Red Cross Society Law on July 16, 1938. It authorized the reorganization of the Ên-t'zu-ts'ai-t'uan P'u-chi-hui, a public relief organization which was started in commemoration of the Emperor's enthronement through an imperial donation, into the proposed Manchoukuo Red Cross Society. Subsequently, an official agreement was reached between the Japan Red Cross Society

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and the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society Organization Committee for the transfer to the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society of all equipments and activities which the former had been carrying on in Manchoukuo.

With this background, the Manchoukuo Red Cross Society was officially launched on October 1, 1938, and the national celebration of its establishment was solemnly held at Hsinking two weeks later, on October 15. It was on this latter date that the two commemorative stamps appeared.

The two stamps consist of 2-fen and 4-fen denominations. Both are of the same design and represent the globe with a map of Manchoukuo in white, upon which appears a Red Cross. On the right and left are sprays of laurel branches, showing peaceful achievements. Across the globe is the inscription, "Man Chou Kuo Chih Shih Tzu She Chung Li Chi Nien" or "Manchoukuo Red Cross Society Establishment Commemorative". The usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" at the top and the denominations at the bottom, with the date (October, 5th Year of Kangte) between the denominational figures complete the design. The 2 fen comes in deep maroon color and the 4 fen in dark green, with red cross on both.

The stamps were designed by Takeo Yamashita of the General Postal Administration Bureau and printed by the Government Printing Office at Hsinking. The paper used is the granite paper with the watermark of six characters. The perforations are 13 x 13 and each sheet contains 100 stamps. The number of issue is reported to be 1,000,000 sets.

This commemorative issue is notable for the fact that its size is the same as that of the regular stamps. All the preceding commemorative issues were larger in size and stood out above all regular series in attractiveness. This issue, in other words, addressed itself to the task of emphasizing the object of commemoration rather than the outward appearance of the stamps themselves. The elimina-

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tion of less-used higher denominations may be attributed also to a similar consideration.

With this issue, moreover, the General Postal Administration Bureau opened a new page in Manchoukuo's philatelic history, by initiating a practice of accepting pre-issuance mail orders and mailing them out on the date of issue. This new departure was designed to help philatelists by giving them all an equal opportunity to purchase, thereby eliminating unnecessary profiteering.

In the actual sale of this issue, another innovation was introduced. The stamps were distributed to all post offices on the basis of the number of 2-fen and 4-fen stamps sold during the preceding year and they remained on sale until the last copy was sold. Unless the purchaser specifically demanded the regular 2-fen and 4-fen stamps, the clerks were instructed to sell the commemorative issue to the last copy. In short, this issue was more extensively used by the public than other previous commemorative issues.

Fig. 114

The special commemorative cancellation used is in the shape of a cross. The large characters are the same as those on the stamps, indicating the subject of commemoration. Other characters are the date and the name of the post office.

The one regrettable phase of this issue is the fact that it contains an endless number of plate errors and printing flaws. It may be safely said that there are more stamps with either a plate error or a printing flaw than perfect ones! This is due probably to the lack of time as the issue had to be prepared in great haste. I list here, therefore, the outstanding errors only. At least two plates appear to have been used and these are designated by sheet A and sheet B.

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A. *Varieties of 2 Fen.*

Fig. 115

1. Double Equator. The most outstanding error in the 2-fen stamp is the double equator lines to the left of the map (Figure 115). This occurs only on the No. 77 stamp of sheet A.

2. Broken "N". The right vertical stroke of "N" is broken off (Figure 116). This occurs only on the No. 95 stamp of sheet A.

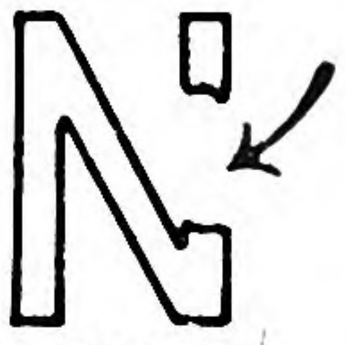

Fig. 116

Fig. 117

3. Broken "Two". There are two types of broken character for "Two". In the one, the upper portion is completely disrupted (Figure 117), and in the other the right diagonal stroke is broken off (Figure 118). The former occurs on the No. 55 stamp and the latter on the No. 24 stamp, both in sheet A.

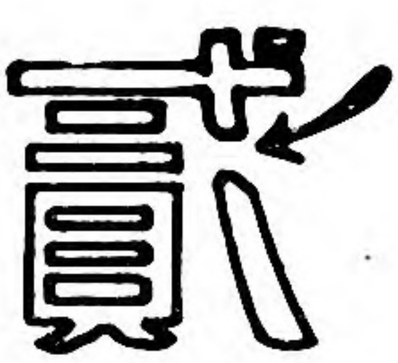

Fig. 118

4. Hooked or Bridged "Two". There are several varieties of the character for "Two". The one shown by Figure 119 occurs on the No. 83 stamp of sheet B; that by Figure 120 on the No. 16 and No. 95 stamps of sheet A and the

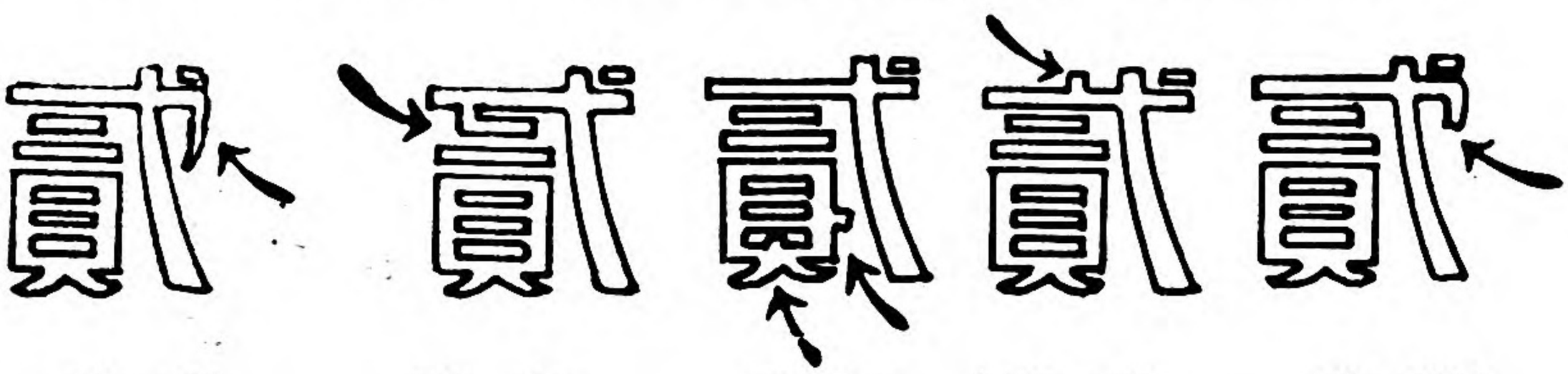

Fig. 119 Fig. 120 Fig. 121 Fig. 122 Fig. 122A

No. 50, No. 56, No. 93 and No. 96 stamps of sheet B; that by Figure 121 on the No. 62 stamp of sheet B; that by Figure 122 on the No. 2, No. 63, and No. 72 stamps of

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sheet A; and that by Figure 122A on the No. 68 stamp of sheet B.

5. Varieties of "Fen". There are several varieties of the character for "Fen". The one shown by the Figure 123 occurs on the No. 38 stamp of sheet B; that by Figure 124 on the No. 88 stamp of sheet B; that by Figure 125 on the

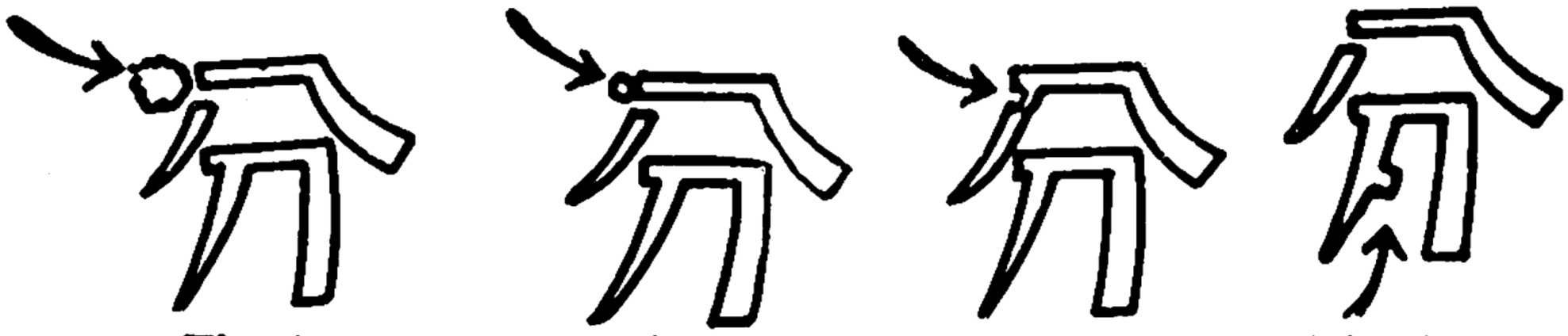

Fig. 123 **Fig. 124** **Fig. 125** **Fig. 126**

No. 22 stamp of sheet A; and that by Figure 126 on the No. 3, No. 11, No. 28, and No. 35 stamps of sheet A, and the No. 26, No. 62, No. 74, and No. 77 stamps of sheet B.

6. Dotted "N". There is a white dot at the top center between two vertical strokes (Figure 127). This occurs on the No. 15, No. 18, No. 46, No. 59, No. 65, No. 78, No. 80, No. 82, and No. 91 stamps of sheet B.

Fig. 127

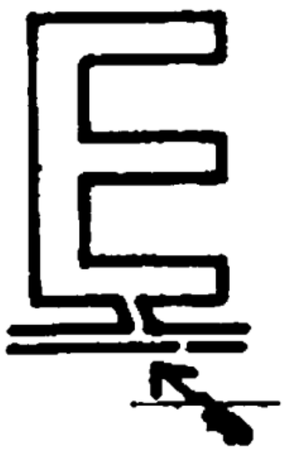

Fig. 128

7. Bridged "E". There is a white diagonal bridge line between the lower center of "E" and the frame line below (Figure 128). This occurs only on the No. 12 stamp of sheet A.

8. Spotted Globe. Near the left bottom edge of the globe, there is a colored spot (Figure 129). This is found only on the No. 69 stamp of sheet B.

Fig. 129

9. Broken Frame. The upper left portion of the frame line above the date is broken off. This occurs only on the No. 17 and No. 83 stamps of sheet A.

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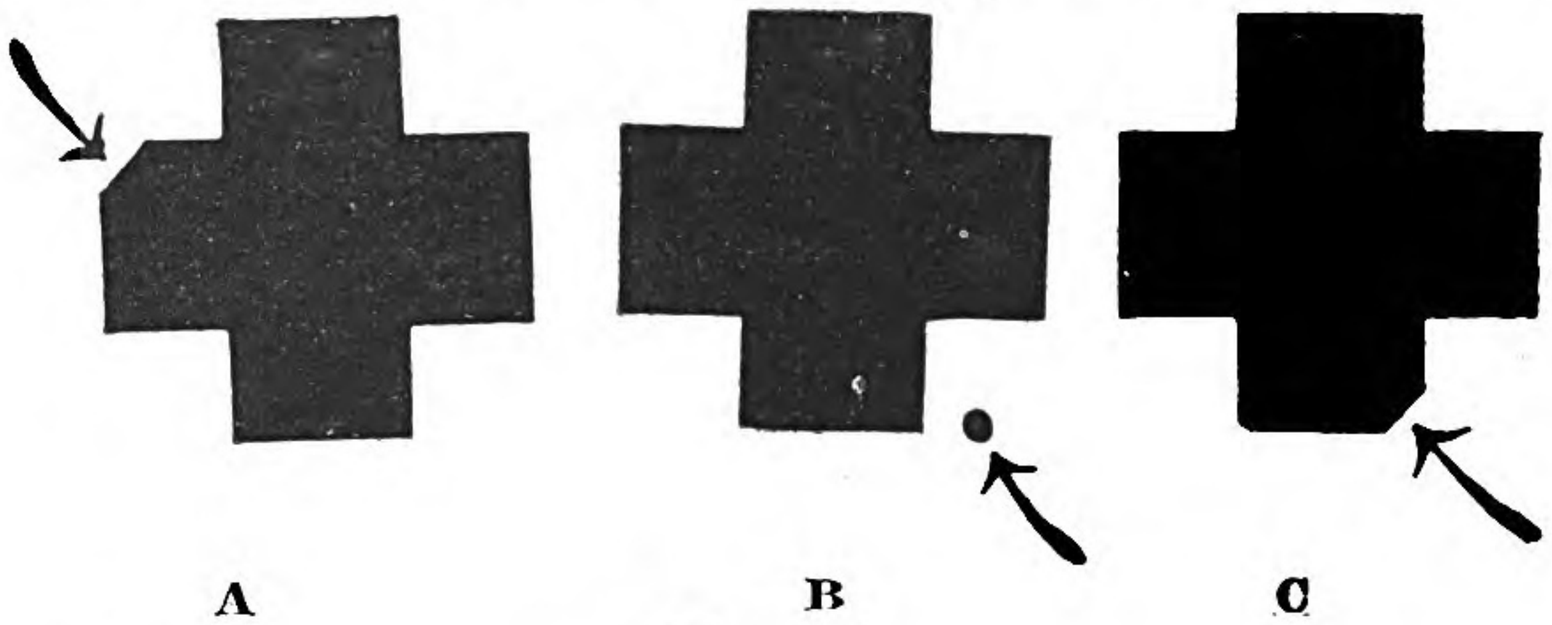
10. Broken Crosses. There are two types of the broken cross (Figure 130). In one, or "A", the left top corner of the horizontal bar is chipped off, and in the other, or "C", the lower right corner of the leg is also chipped off. The former occurs on the No. 89 stamp of all sheets and the



A B C

Fig. 130

latter on the No. 76 stamp of some sheets, replacing the usual red dot described below.

11. Dotted Cross. There is a small red dot near the lower right corner of the cross (Figure 130-B). This is found only on the No. 76 stamp. As noted above, in some sheets, this is replaced by the broken corner.

B. Varieties of 4 Fen

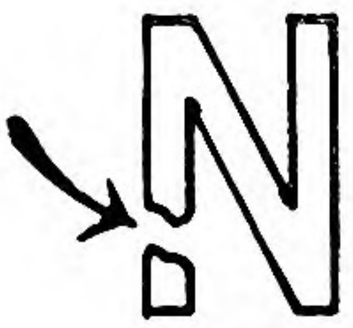


Fig. 131

1. Broken "N". The lower portion of the left vertical stroke is broken into two (Figure 131). This occurs only on the No. 94 stamp of sheet B.

2. Streaked "E". There is a white streak running up to the letter "E" from the frame line directly below (Figure 132). This is found only on the No. 9 stamp of sheet A.

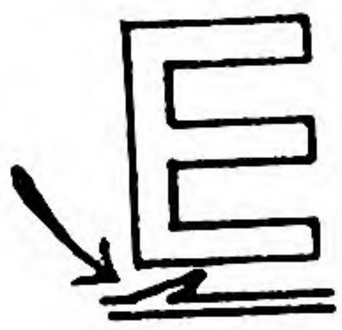


Fig. 132

Fig. 133

3. Buried Latitude. The second latitude line from the top between the map and the first left longitude line is filled in with ink, a portion of the ink sticking out onto the map (Figure 133). This occurs only on the No. 34 stamp of sheet B.

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4. Stray Latitude Line. There is a short white stray line just above the meeting point of the first latitude line below the equator and the second longitude line from the left (Figure 134). This occurs only on the No. 58 stamp of sheet B.

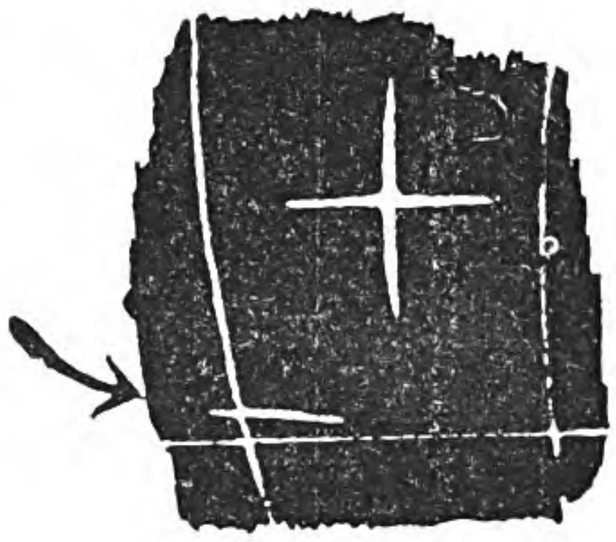

Fig. 134

5. White Spotted Longitude. There is a white spot on the second longitude line from the left just below the equator. This is found only on the No. 91 stamp of sheet A.

Fig. 135

6. Dotted "4". There is a small green dot at the left elbow of "4", as if the corner is cut off by a white line (Figure 135). There is also another green dot just above the box containing "4 FEN" and below the globe. These are found only on the No. 1 stamp of sheet A.

9. *The Railway Issue*

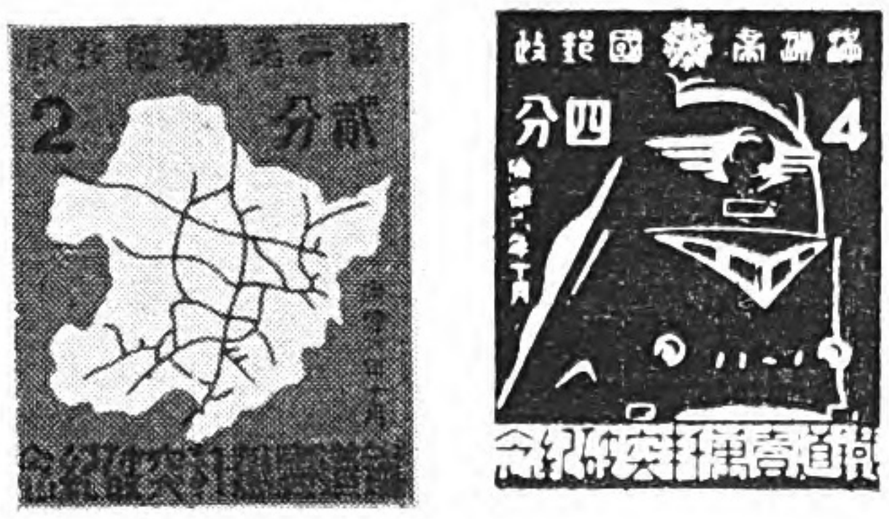

Fig. 136

The ninth commemorative set of stamps was issued on October 21, 1939, in commemoration of the passing of 10,000 kilometer mileage mark in railway construction in Manchuria. It celebrates the amazing expansion in railway construction under the new statehood.

The first page in the history of railway building in Manchuria was turned through British initiative in 1894, when

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the Peking-Shanhaikuan line was pushed about thirty-seven miles into Manchuria. The remainder of what became known as the Peking-Mukden Railway was constructed between 1898 and 1902.

This move was soon followed by Russia in her search for an ice-free outlet to the sea, eventually resulting in the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway across North Manchuria and the historic connection of the Trans-Siberian railway with Vladivostock. It was completed between 1897 and 1902, the lines being opened to traffic in 1903. The Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05, ended all construction for the time being.

From the close of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 and the close of the second decade of the century, very little new railway building, due largely to the World War, was witnessed in Manchuria. However, the Russian transfer to Japan in 1905 of her railways south of Changchun, now Hsinking, led to the organization of the South Manchuria Railway Company in 1906 and the complete reconstruction of those half-ruined lines.

While this period did not see any new railway buildings, it became notable in the railway history of Manchuria for two reasons. First, America tried to acquire railway interests in Manchuria, as shown by the Harriman proposal, the Chinchou-Aigun railway project, Knox's railway neutralization scheme, and China consortia. Second, Japan entered into various agreements with China to build several railways in Manchuria and Mongolia, none of which was permitted by the latter actually to be built.

The third decade saw a brisk revival of railway construction. This time the Chinese Government took the initiative and began to promote her own program of effecting a railway network by ignoring various Sino-Japanese railway agreements. As a result a tense international atmosphere gradually was created in Manchuria, eventually leading up to the fateful Manchurian Incident of 1931. Among the

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Chinese-built railway lines of this period are the Mukden-Hailungcheng-Kirin line, the Tahusan-Tungliao line, the Harbin-Hailun line, and several other minor lines. This period also saw the Japanese railway building in Manchuria under various Chinese contracts. Among these, the more important ones are the Ssupingkai-Tsitsihar and Kirin-Tunhua lines.

A new era of railway construction dawned over Manchuria after the founding of Manchoukuo in 1932 and the railway map of Manchuria was completely changed during the first seven years of her statehood. To this end three revolutionary steps were taken: 1. entrusting to the South Manchuria Railway Company the management and operation of all Manchoukuo State Railways which the Manchoukuo Government had taken over from China in 1932; 2. drawing up of a comprehensive program of railway construction in order to develop the country; and 3. purchasing of all Russian rights in the Chinese Eastern Railway in 1935.

Of these, the most amazing has been the speed with which new railways were constructed. This enormous railway construction program added extensive new lines throughout Manchuria, so that the total mileage of all railways had passed the 10,000-kilometer mark by October, 1939. It was natural that the South Manchuria Railway Company, to which was entrusted the responsible task of all construction works, saw cause for the commemoration of such an accomplishment within such a short period and an elaborate celebration was held at the Company's Railway Directorate General at Mukden on October 21, 1939.

It was to share the spirit of this national jubilee that the Department of Communications decided to issue a set of two commemorative stamps.

As in the Red Cross Society issue, there were only two denominations. The 2-fen stamp shows a railway map of Manchoukuo, the map standing out in white against an

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orange background with the railway network and lettering in dark purple. The 4-fen stamp depicts the "Asia", the South Manchuria Railway Company's crack express train, completely stream-lined and air-conditioned and noise-eliminated, in two tones of light and dark indigo. At the top of both stamps is the usual panel of "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng," with the Imperial crest in the center, and at the bottom the legend "T'ieh Lu I Wan Kilo T'u P'ê Chi Nien" or "Commemoration of Railways Passing 10,000 Kilometers." The other writings are the denominational figures and the date of issue.

The stamps were designed by Jun Sasaki, of the South Manchuria Railway Company, in collaboration with the author and Takeo Yamashita of the General Postal Administration Bureau. They come in sheets of 100 stamps with 13 x 13 perforations. The paper is the usual white granite with the watermark of six characters. They were lithographed and printed at the Government Printing Office at Hsinking. The number of issue is reported to be 1,500,000 sets.

Fig. 137

One notable innovation was made with this issue, namely, the printing of two slogans on the top margin of the sheet. One reads: "Place Postage Stamps on Left Top Corner of Envelope" and the other: "Write Names and Addresses of Sender and Receiver clearly." These slogans are printed in two colors, alternately using the two colors which make up the stamps.

The mail order system was continued and the stamps were sold at all post offices until the last copy was exhausted.

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The special cancellation used shows the "Asia" passing through a tunnel made with "10,000" figures. At the top is given the subject of commemoration and below the date and the name of the post office.

Fig. 138

Because these stamps are printed in two colors, there are various oddities resulting from the shifting of colors. There are stamps with either no high light or wide high light on the right contour line of the locomotive, no space or wide space between the characters and locomotive, and the characters sticking out either to the right or to the left.

There are, however, a few interesting plate varieties, of which the following are the outstanding ones:

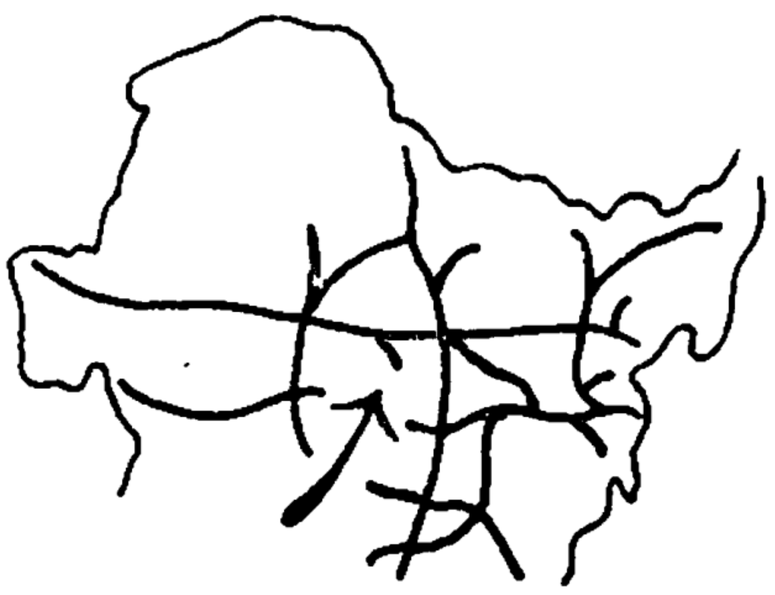
Fig. 139

1. Extra Railway Line. On the 2-fen map stamp, there is an extra railway line, running southward from the top railway line which runs diagonally across North Manchuria (Figure 139). This occurs only on the No. 28 stamp.

2. Broken Railway Lines. Also on the 2-fen stamp, the two railway lines are broken off (Figure 140). This is found only on the No. 8 stamp.

Fig. 140

Fig. 141

3. Broken "T'u". Again on the 2-fen stamp, the right half of the cap on the character for "T'u" is broken off (Figure 141). This occurs only on the No. 54 stamp of every sheet.

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4. Broken "Ti". On the 4-fen stamp, the right diagonal stroke is broken off below the top horizontal stroke (Figure 142). This occurs only on the No. 57 stamp of every sheet.

Fig. 142

10. *The Emperor's Second Japan Visitation Issue*

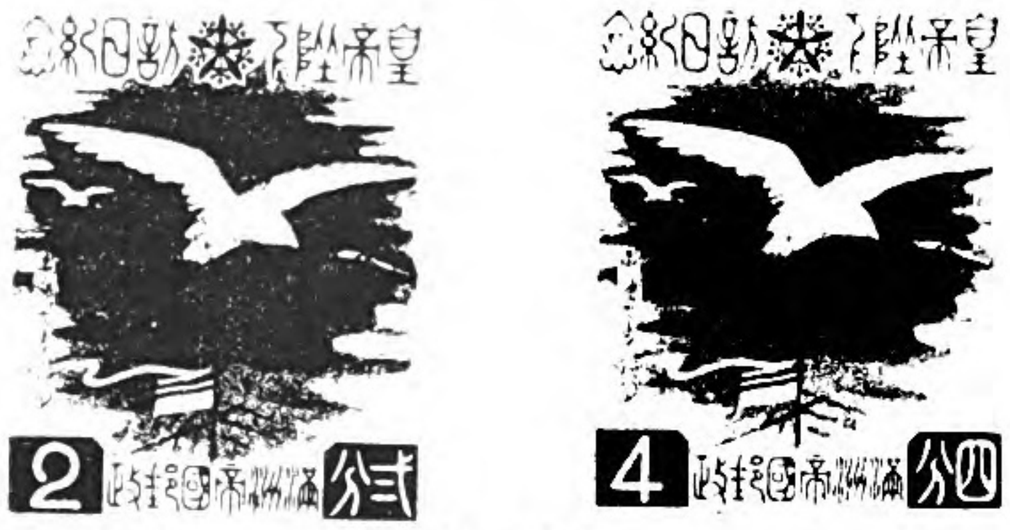

Fig. 143

Emperor Kang Teh of Manchoukuo paid his second visit to Japan in June, 1940. The visit was made for the purpose of felicitating Emperor Hirohito of Japan in connection with the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Island Empire. The Manchoukuo Emperor left Hsinking on June 22, reached Tokyo on June 26, and, after visiting various historic sites and shrines, returned to Hsinking on July 10.

On the day the Manchoukuo Emperor reached Tokyo, the Hsinking Government released a set of two beautiful photogravure stamps to commemorate this historic event. It will be recalled that the Emperor's first visit to Japan in 1935 was celebrated with a set of four commemorative stamps.

For the central theme of this issue, numerous subjects had been considered. These largely concerned various incidents and episodes of the 1935 visit. The one finally agreed upon was the most auspicious incident of the first royal trip. While the Emperor was voyaging aboard the Japanese Cruiser Hiei, a pair of cranes followed the ship for a while and disappeared. All were in agreement at the time that it

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was a most auspicious omen as the crane is a most auspicious bird in Japanese tradition, especially signifying happiness and longevity. The Emperor was extremely pleased with the incident and remarked, among other things, that even the birds must have felt jubilant over the friendly relations between Manchoukuo and Japan, and the prevailing peace in East Asia.

This auspicious incident inspired Yoai Ohta, an artist of the Department of Peoples Welfare to paint in oil a picture of two white cranes flying over the Cruiser Hiei with the Manchoukuo Emperor's naval flag streaming upon its mast. This oil painting finally became the central theme of the stamps with necessary inscriptions.

The stamps of this issue comprise two denominations of 2 fen and 4 fen, the former in red violet and the latter in emerald. At the top, separated by the usual Imperial crest, is an inscription in archaic characters: "Huang Ti Pi Hsia Fang Jih Chi Nien" or "Emperor's Japan Visitation Commemorative." At the bottom are the denominational figures and the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng," while on the side is indicated the year and month of issue, namely, June, Seventh Year of Kangte.

The stamps were printed at the Japanese Government Printing Office in Tokyo, of which the imprint appears at the bottom center margin. It is said that this is the first time an oil painting was reproduced through the photogravure process on stamps in Japan. The paper used is the white wove without the usual watermark, and the stamps come in sheets of 100. The perforations are 13 x 13. On the top margin are printed again the two slogans as in the Railway Issue.

The number of issue was as follows: 2 fen, 2,500,000 and 4 fen, 2,500,000. The method of distribution and sale was the same as that of the Red Cross Society and Railway Issues and the mail sale was continued.

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The special cancellation used presented two flowers, namely, cherry blossoms signifying Japan and apricot blossoms representing Manchoukuo. The inscription at the top is "Huang Ti Pi Hsia Fang Jih Chi Nien" as on the stamps. The date of issue and the name of the post office complete the design.

Fig. 144

As usual with the photogravure printing, there are numerous printing flaws, especially white or color spots. Leaving these out of consideration, there are several plate varieties worth noting.

A. Varieties of 2 Fen

Fig. 145

1. Bridged "Fen". One of the lower diagonal strokes of the character "Fen" cuts through the other and reaches the right top stroke (Figure 145). This occurs on the No. 13 stamp only.

2. White Spot Near Feet. There is a white spot just below the feet of the larger crane. This occurs only on the No. 16 stamp.

3. Dotted Mast. The horizontal bar of the mast just below the flag has a color spot at the point where the rope crosses it. This is found only on the No. 88 stamp.

B. Varieties of 4 Fen

1. Color Spot in Sky. There is a decided color spot above the wing of the larger crane to the right of the stamp. This occurs only on the No. 98 stamp.

2. White Spot Under Crane. There is a white spot just below the body of the larger crane. This occurs only on the No. 26 stamp.

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3. White Streaked Flag. There is a white streak at the top of the flag (Figure 146). This is found only on the No. 36 stamp.

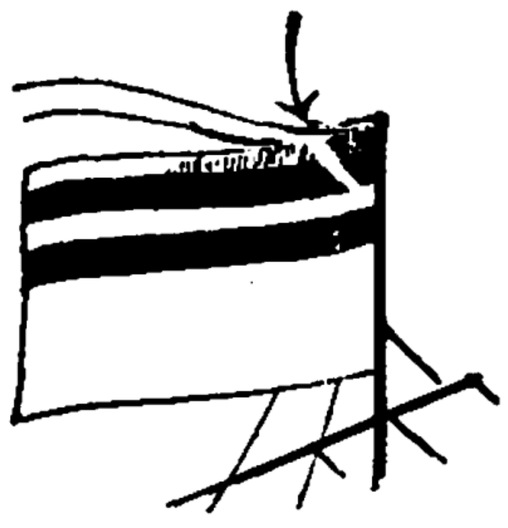

Fig. 146

4. Dotted "Chou". There is a small color dot just above the character "Chou". This is on the No. 33 stamp.

11. *The Extraordinary Census Issue*

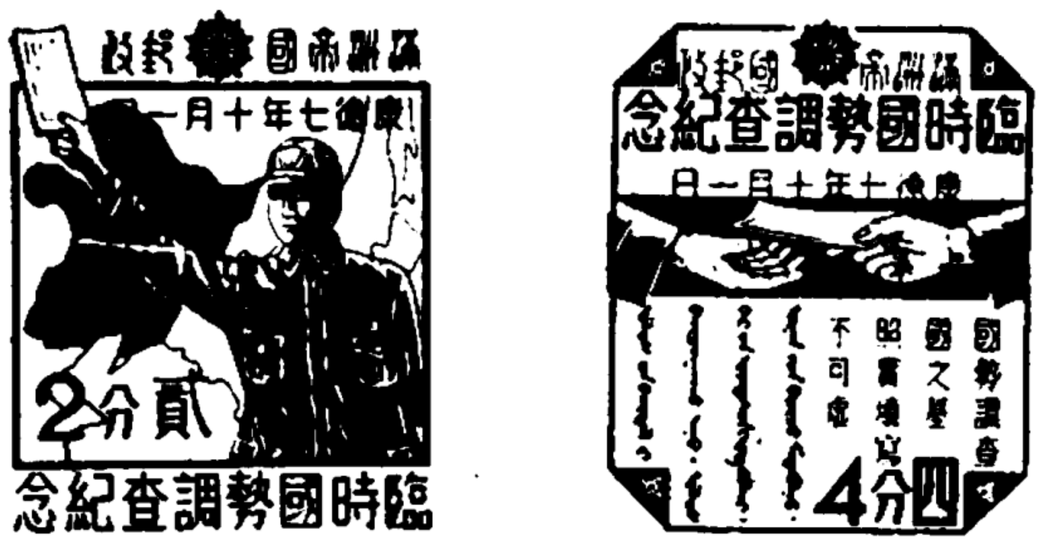

Fig. 147

The year 1940 was the decennial census year in many countries, including the United States of America and the Japanese Empire. Likewise, the Manchoukuo Government decided to take her first extraordinary census on Oct. 1, 1940.

In order to advertise widely the importance of this census, the Government solicited the cooperation of the Department of Communications to issue a set of commemorative stamps. Necessarily, these stamps were released on September 10, 1940, just three weeks in advance of the proposed census date.

This Extraordinary Census Issue, the first of its kind issued in Manchuria, consists of two denominations, 2 fen and 4 fen. Incidentally, they constitute the third bi-color commemorative set of the country.

The design of the 2-fen stamp, in maroon and orange, portrays a census official holding the census form in his outstretched right hand and calling the people to execute their duty. In the background is shown the map of Manchoukuo

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in a solid outline of orange. The census official, it may be added, is wearing the official uniform of the Concordia Association, of which all government officials and employees are members. The subject of commemoration is given in large block letters across the bottom of the stamp: "Lin Shih Kuo Shih Tiao Ch'a Chi Nien" or "In Commemoration of the Extraordinary Census." At the top, on both sides of the Imperial crest, is found the usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng", while directly below is the date of the extraordinary census, namely, "October 1, Seventh Year of Kang-te." The denominational figures complete the stamp.

The 4-fen stamp in olive and dark green shows the filing of the census form, from the hand of a citizen to the hand of a census enumerator. Directly below is given vertically, the census slogan in Manchurian on the right and Mongolian on the left, the two dominating languages in Manchoukuo. The slogan in free translation reads: "The Census is the Foundation of the Country; Give Honest and Straight-forward Information." Above the central horizontal panel, containing hands, are given the same three inscriptions which appear on the 2-fen stamp—the Manchoukuo label, the subject of commemoration, and the census date. At the right bottom corner are found the necessary denominational figures.

This Extraordinary Census Issue is unique among Manchoukuo Commemoratives for three reasons. This is the first time a commemorative set was issued three weeks in advance of the event which it commemorates and thereby propagates. All the past commemoratives were issued on the date when the commemorated events took place. In the second place, this is the only issue which publicizes a national slogan concerning the event which it commemorates. In this sense, the two stamps of this issue are both commemorative and poster stamps. Lastly, this is also the first time that the Mongolian language found its way into Manchoukuo stamps. The Manchurians and Mongolians constitute the chief racial elements in Manchoukuo.

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Both of these stamps were designed by Yoai Ohta of the Department of Peoples Welfare, who, it may be recalled, designed the Emperor's Second Japan Visitation Issue. They come in sheets of 100 stamps. The paper is the usual white granite with the six-character watermark. The perforations are 13 x 13. As in the past two issues, two postal slogans appear on the upper margins of all sheets. The printing was done at the Government Printing Office at Hsinking. There is no imprint, however.

The number of issue is reported to be: 2 fen, 8,000,000, and 4 fen, 10,000,000.

It should be added that no special cancellation form was used on the date of issue as in all previous cases of commemorative issues. This is due probably to the fact that the event which it commemorates took place three weeks after the issue. In this respect, it is again unique. It may be added, however, that a special cancellation was used on October 1, the date upon which the census was taken (Figure 148).

Being lithographed, the two stamps of this issue contain numerous printing flaws. The following list represents only the more important plate varieties which are constant.

Fig. 148

A. Varieties of 2 Fen

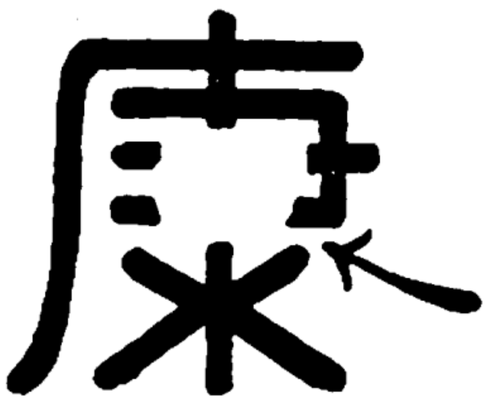
Fig. 149

1. Broken Characters. There are many broken characters. More noteworthy ones are the broken "Man" and "Yu" on the No. 82 stamp, the broken "Kuo" on the No. 49 stamp, the broken "Kang" (Figure 149) on the No. 37 stamp, and the broken "Man" on the No. 38 stamp.

2. Dotted Characters. Among the dotted characters, the more interesting ones are a dot over the left side of the

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character "Chi" (Figure 150) on the No. 22 stamp, a dot over the character for "One" on the No. 50 stamp, making it read "October 2" instead of "October 1", a dot over the

Fig. 150

Fig. 151

Fig. 152

character for "Year" on the No. 19 stamp, a dot at the right center of the character for "Year" and another above the character for "Seven" on the No. 20 stamp, a dot on the character "Shih" (Figure 151) on the No. 59 stamp, and a dot near the lower left corner of the character "Kuo" (Figure 152) on the No. 96 stamp.

3. Broken "Ch'a". The character "Ch'a" is broken at two places (Figure 153). This occurs only on the No. 19 stamp.

Fig. 153

4. Hooked "Chêng". The last stroke of the character "Chêng" has a hook, while the stroke just above it has another hook. These are found only on the No. 95 stamp.

5. Displaced Colors. Due to the bi-color printing, there are various displaced colors. Especially this is so with the orange map.

6. Offset. There are offset copies, especially of the orange map.

B. Varieties of 4 Fen

1. Double Impression. There is a double impression of the parts printed by the black ink.

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Fig. 154

2. Broken "Chi". There is a break in the right portion of the character "Chi" (Figure 154). This occurs only on the No. 11 stamp.

3. Broken Fingers. There is a white spot on the hand at the left, making it appear as if fingers are broken (Figure 155). This is found only on the No. 72 stamp.

Fig. 155

Fig. 156

4. Spotted Hand. The hand at the right has a black spot (Figure 156). This occurs only on the No. 68 stamp.

5. Broken Crest. The Imperial Crest appears to be slightly shaken up. This is found only on the No. 78 stamp.

Fig. 157

6. Broken "Chih". The character "Chih", the second character in the second row in green, is broken at the center (Figure 157). This is found only on the No. 59 stamp.

7. Dotted Characters. There is a black dot on the side of the character "Ch'a" (Figure 158) on the No. 85 stamp, and a black dot within the character "Shih" (Figure 159) on the No. 32 stamp.

Fig. 158

Fig. 159

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8. White-Spotted Finger. There is a white spot under the finger tip of the hand at the right. This is found only on the No. 31 stamp. There is also a small white spot above the hand at the left on the same stamp.

9. Displaced Colors. Due to the bi-color printing, there are various displaced colors, usually the green color being displaced to above or below, right or left.

12. *The Japan's 2,600th Anniversary Congratulatory Issue*

Fig. 160

The Japanese Empire celebrated in 1940 the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Empire by Jimmu Tenno. As a part of this celebration she released a set of four commemorative stamps on two separate dates, a set of two on February 11th and the remainder on November 10th.

In order to felicitate this unusual anniversary, Emperor Kang Teh of Manchoukuo had already made a personal visit to Emperor Hirohito of Japan. In addition, the Government at Hsinking wanted to express its abounding congratulatory spirit officially. This idea was behind the issuance of a set of two commemorative stamps in honor of the 2,600th anniversary of the Island Empire, just as many neighboring countries have issued commemorative stamps in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Constitution of the United States of America. For the date of such an issue, the Government chose September 18th, the ninth anniversary of the Manchurian Incident.

This set consists of two stamps, 2 fen in rose and 4 fen in blue. The 2-fen stamp shows a script written by Chang Ching-hui, the Premier of Manchoukuo, and means "In Celebration of the 2,600th Anniversary of the Founding of

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Japan." The frame around the writing, designed by Yoai Ohta consists of a Greek key pattern with a butterfly at the bottom center and P'an Ch'ang loop patterns on each side with old style characters. The writing on the right signifies "Spiritual Harmony between Japan and Manchoukuo" and that on the left, "September, 7th Year of Kangte." These patterns and the butterfly are, according to Manchurian traditions, symbols of happiness and long life. The usual "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng," the Imperial crest, and the denominational figures complete the design.

The central design of the 4-fen stamp is typically Manchurian in its way of expressing felicitation. It represents the "Dragon Dance" with a large cloth-covered basket in dragon form and a group of dancing boys. On all nation-wide celebrations, the dragon dance is a common sight, traditional of the Manchurian people, and it was only natural that Li Ping-ho, the Manchu designer of the stamp, should have selected it in portraying the spirit of felicitation which the issue represents. The writing on the right box again means "In Celebration of the 2,600th Anniversary of the Founding of Japan" and that on the left box "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" and denominational figures. The usual Imperial crest appears at the top center and the date to the left of the central design.

The stamps were engraved and printed at the Japanese Government Printing Bureau in Tokyo. The paper used is granite with the usual watermark of six characters. The perforations are 13 x 13. The sheets of the 2 fen come with 100 stamps and that of the 4 fen with 50. There is no slogan in either of the top margins and also no imprint. The number of issue is reported to be 5,000,000 sets.

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The special cancellation was provided again with this issue. It is in the shape of an octagonal lantern. In the center is the "Shuang Hsi" or "Double Happiness" in bold lettering. On the upper three sides are inscriptions meaning "In Celebration of the 2,600th Anniversary of the Founding of Japan," while at the bottom are given the date and the name of the post office.

Fig. 161

Two things should be stressed in recording this issue. First, this is the first time that a Manchurian artist designed a Manchoukuo commemorative stamp. Necessarily, in every respect, it reflects the Manchu atmosphere and makes the issue truly Manchurian. Second, this is also the first time that the Manchu calligraphy, a prized personal art of Orientals, found its place as a central design of a Manchoukuo commemorative stamp in place of a usual pictorial design.

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VI. THE AIR MAIL ISSUES

Fig. 162

The air mail service was inaugurated in Manchoukuo on November 3, 1932. It was expanded gradually until air routes linked all important cities as well as Manchoukuo and Japan and China. With the general adjustment and consolidation of the postal administration system on April 1, 1937, the air mail began to play an important role in the mail service of the country and the air mail special delivery service was added on July 1, 1937. All air mails within Manchoukuo are carried by the Manchuria Air Transport Company.

At first, stamps of the general issues were used invariably for air mails. With the steady growth in the volume of air mail, the special air mail stamps were introduced late in 1936 to facilitate the handling of mails through the air.

Fig. 163

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1. *The First Air Mail Series*

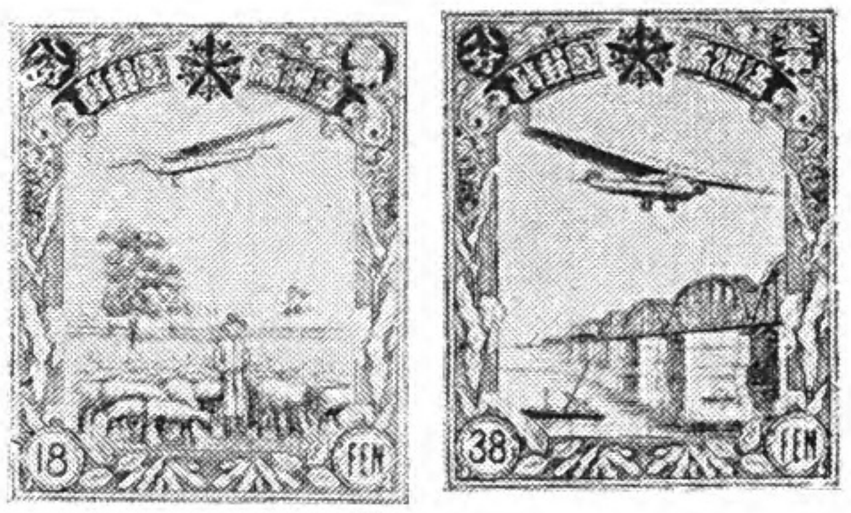

Fig. 164

The first Manchoukuo air mail series consisted of 18 fen in blue green and 38 fen in deep blue. They were released on December 5, 1936.

These two stamps, being released at the same time with the fourth regular postal series, retained the same format as that of the latter, kaoliang stalks on the right and left columns, soya beans at the bottom, and the Imperial crest with "Man Chou Ti Kuo Yu Chêng" at the top. For the central design, the 18-fen stamp depicts a monoplane flying over a flock of grazing sheep in an expansive plain. It is a typical scene in the western and northwestern parts of Manchoukuo where the Mongols specialize in sheep raising. The 38-fen stamp shows a monoplane flying over a railroad bridge in Harbin. This bridge spans the Sungari River in the northern district of Harbin, and was built by the Russians as a part of the old Chinese Eastern Railway during the closing years of the last century.

All specifications of these stamps are the same as those of the fourth regular series.

2. *The Second Air Mail Series*

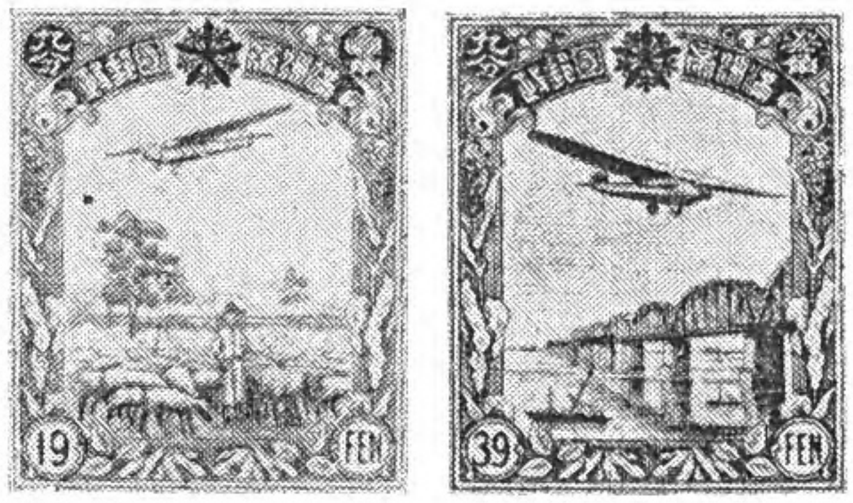

Fig. 165

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The general change in postal rates in 1937 necessitated new air mail stamps. Thus were released, on April 1, 1937, two new values, the 19 fen in blue green and the 39 fen in deep blue. The designs and all other specifications are similar to those of the first series, the 19 fen replacing the 18 fen and the 39 fen the 38 fen.

It should be added that the 39-fen air mail was released not on April 1, but actually on September 14, without an announcement. The number prepared was reported to be only 10,000 copies but only 9,000 copies of this number had been actually sold, the remaining 1,000 copies having been taken over by various dealers. This explains the scarcity and high value attached to this stamp until it was reprinted and reissued in 1939.

3. *The Third Air Mail Series*

The 39-fen air mail stamp was sold out soon after its release in July, 1937, and the air mail stamps were gradually replaced by the regular postage stamps as in Japan. By 1939, however, the increase in air mails to Japan caused an increased demand for 39-fen stamp in place of two or three stamps purely as a matter of convenience. As a result, the General Postal Administration Bureau ordered the reprint of the 39-fen air mail stamp and released it in July, 1939, again without an announcement.

This caused quite a sensation among the dealers and collectors of Manchoukuo stamps as the 39-fen air mail stamp was commanding a high price and scarcity was already its synonym. Much debate followed. The truth of the matter is that the new printing was made from the old plates and abundant copies were released for sale. Consequently, because it is difficult to tell the difference between the two printings, the price suddenly dropped.

For the Manchoukuo specialists, however, the differences between the two printings can be easily detected and there is every tendency, in spite of the Scott Catalogue, to treat

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the two printings as separate issues. The differences may be summarized as follows:

1. The paper of the first printing is thinner and lighter, while that of the second printing is slightly thicker;

2. The color of the paper of the first printing is slightly bluish tinted, while that of the second printing is white without any tint;

3. The color of ink of the first printing is blue with an apparent greenish effect, while that of the second printing is blue with a whitish effect; and

4. The gum of the first printing is thin, smooth, and less glossy, while that of the second printing is thick, uneven, and quite glossy.

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APPENDIX

The Su Ping-wen Overprints

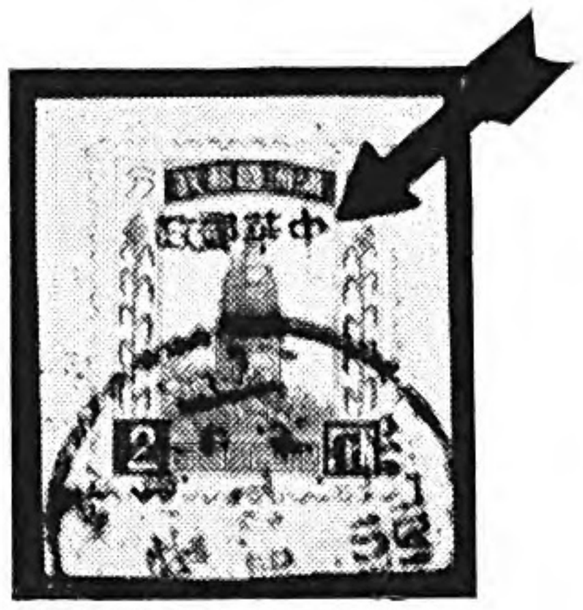

Fig. 166

On September 27, 1932, General Su Ping-wen rose in rebellion against the Manchoukuo Government and captured several towns, such as Manchouli and Hailar, along the western portion of what was then the Chinese Eastern Railway. His power lasted only until the middle of December and he escaped into the Soviet Union by the close of the year.

This short interlude had a peculiar effect upon the philatelic history of Manchoukuo. While in power, General Su Ping-wen seized the Manchoukuo postage stamps which had been already distributed and which he had chanced upon in the post offices of several towns along the railway. He then had these stamps overprinted with four Chinese characters, "Chung Hua Yu Chêng" or "Chinese Postal Administration", horizontally from right to left supposedly over the Man Chou Kuo Yu Chêng" or "Manchoukuo Postal Administration" on the top panel of the stamps. These overprinted stamps were put into circulation at those post offices from the latter part of September, 1932, until as late as January, 1933. However, the "war" cut up communication lines and probably only a limited number were actually used. A few slipped into Harbin under the cover of confusion. Naturally, the most valuable are those on covers, especially with legible and authentic cancellations.

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There are in existence to-day several varieties of overprints thus made and used, many of them without doubt outright forgeries. From the authenticated covers and stamps cut out of the letters actually received from the towns in question, the following facts seem to be the main peculiarities of these prized overprints: that there are at least two distinct chops with which the overprints had been made, as illustrated by Figure 167; that the overprints had been made in two colors, black and vermilion or red, with an occasional shade of violet, the latter being probably produced by the mixture of two colors on one chop; that the paint or ink used, especially the vermilion, is a rather oily one, often leaving greasy spots around the overprints; that the chops appear to have been made of wood; and that the overprints had probably been made by hand so that they are usually very vaguely printed, often unevenly and out of the place.

Fig. 167

Of these Su Ping-wen overprints, only a small number of authentic copies are believed to be in the hands of various collectors. Exceedingly few are on covers. They represent all denominations of the 1932 series of Manchoukuo stamps and exist both in used and mint conditions, although the most widely used were without doubt the 4-fen and 2-fen stamps.

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The Su Ping-wen overprints already constitute very rare items on. the Manchoukuo list and one should guard against numerous forgeries already in the market.

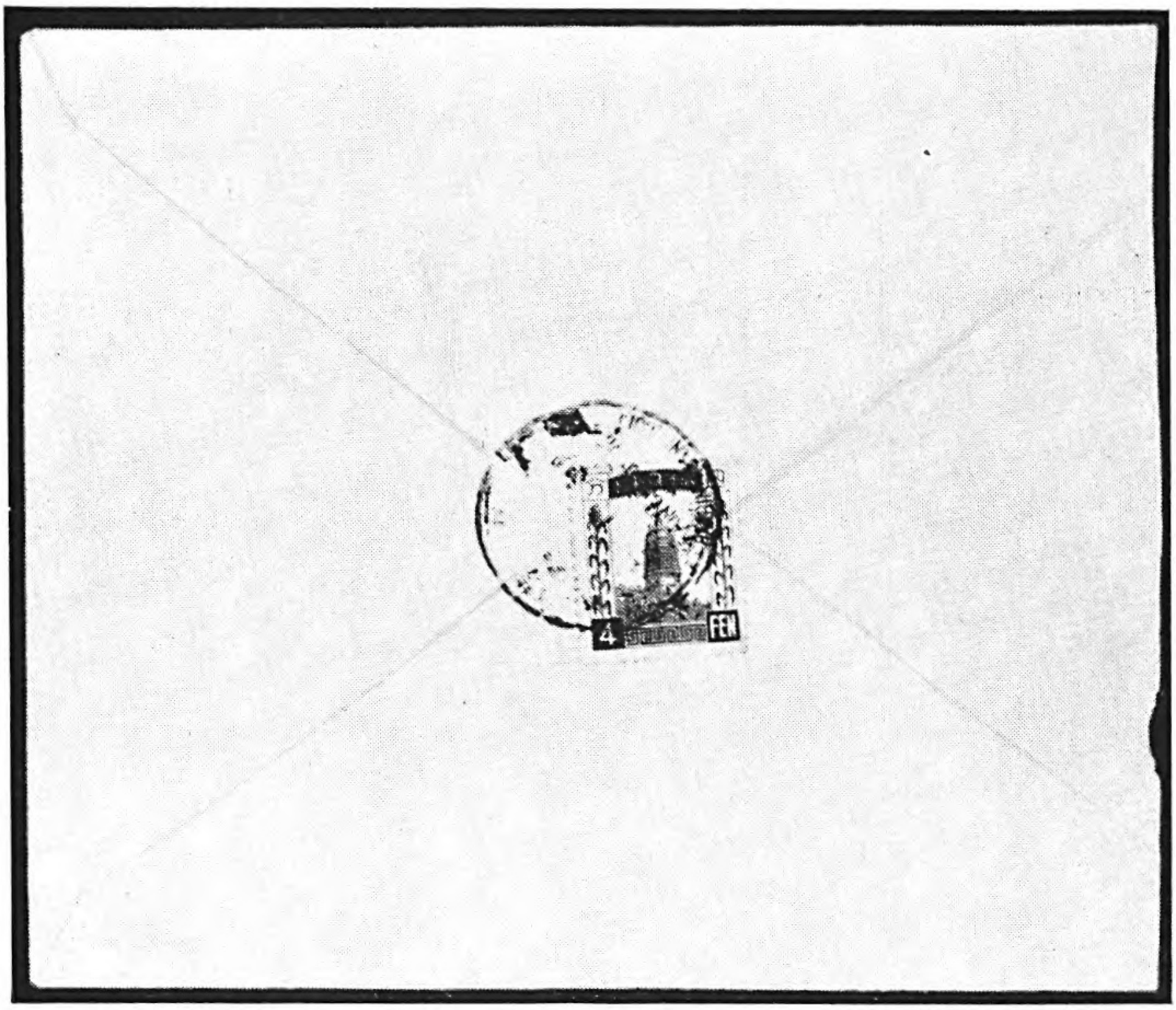

Fig. 168

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